

The Beaver

AUTUMN 1964





**"Wee Commend your Prudent interposition
with the Indians to compose their difference & Warrs
one with another, Continue Those good Offices
as much as you can..."**

Letter to Governor Geyer, Fort York
From the Governor and Committee
London, June 17, 1692.

Hudson's Bay Company.

INCORPORATED 2ND MAY 1670.

The Beaver

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photographed by Dr J. D. Ives.

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HUDSON'S BAY HOUSE

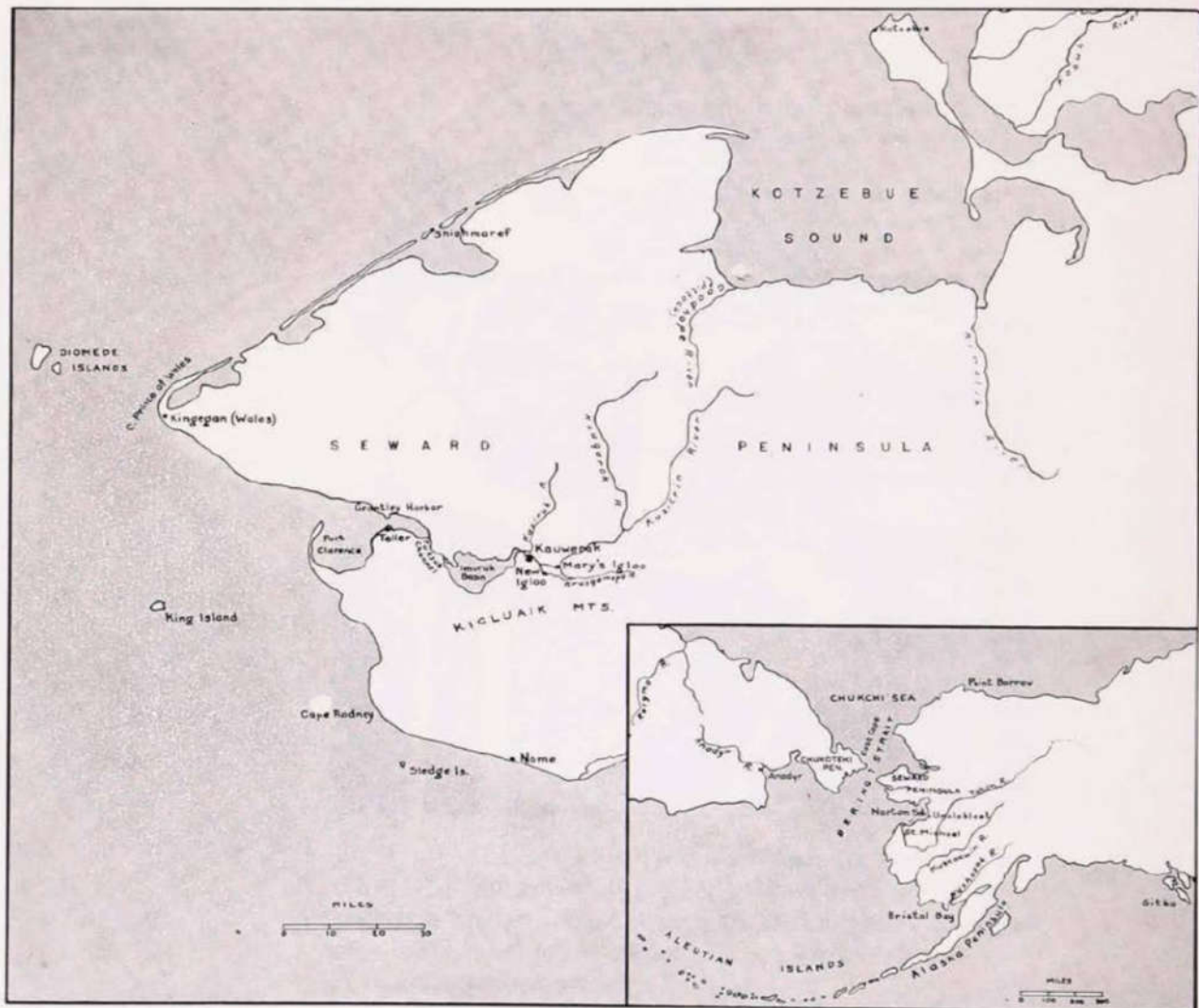
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KAUWERAK

LOST VILLAGE OF ALASKA

by Dorothy Jean Ray



Author of "Artists of the Tundra and the Sea", Mrs Ray has spent more than two years on intensive archival research and field work for an ethnohistory of the Seward Peninsula Eskimos which she is now writing. This article on Kauwerak (of which there are many variations including Chewuren, Koveerak, Kaviak, Kaweren) is one result.

NO LOST GOLD MINE of the Far North could have caused more excitement than a lost Russian village in the heart of Seward Peninsula, Alaska, many years ago. Old tales said that the fort-like village was built in mid-seventeenth century when four boatloads of Russian Cossacks drifted across the northern Chukchi Sea from Siberia to America. Managing to get wrecked together, a thousand miles from their launching, the Cossacks gathered up their Russian belongings and journeyed far inland to set up their legendary housekeeping, almost a century before Europeans actually saw any part of Alaska, and 130 years before Captain Cook had trod a northern beach.

In 1818, 170 years after the supposed founding of the village, the Alaskan headquarters of the Russian-American Company at Sitka sent a man named Korsakovski to determine, once and for all, the whereabouts of the village. Korsakovski, in the Bristol Bay area, was to combine the search for a fort on the "River Khiuveren" with establishing a trading post on the Nushagak River, supposedly near the "Khiuveren". The interior of Alaska, vast and unknown, was still the playground for imagination, so the Company did not know that the two rivers were more than 450 miles apart.

After numerous fruitless surveys, Korsakovski abandoned the search, and in 1861 P. A. Tikhmenev, official historian for the Russian-American Company, finally wrote the last chapter to a legend two centuries old: "[Korsakovski's] investigation . . . proved that the assumption of Cossack descendants in America is groundless."

The search for an old pre-European Russian village had resulted from coincidences of fact and rumour coupled with abysmal ignorance of the Alaskan Arctic before the 1850s. Actually, the legend was based on a real Eskimo village, Kauwerak, east of Port Clarence. Its fame was so great several hundred years ago that Siberian Chukchi, who had never seen Alaska, had heard about it. Kauwerak, itself, should be called a lost village, because it has almost been forgotten today—even by the Eskimos themselves.

Kauwerak was first noted in print by Peter Simon Pallas in *Neue Nordische Beytrage* (volume I) published in 1781, when he discussed, but did not reproduce, a map made in 1765 by Nikolai Daurkin, a Cossack-reared Chukchi. Daurkin placed opposite Siberia a large land mass on which "the fortified village of a ruler, Inulam, is located on the River Chewuren." This Chukchi version of the village's name was later used in variant ways for the mythical Russian settlement, or the river on which it supposedly was situated.

Apparently, destiny had prepared this strange fate for Kauwerak because it was different in many ways from the usual Eskimo villages of northern Alaska. In contrast to the coastal villages with semi-subterranean dwellings, and with inhabitants who hunted sea mammals, Kauwerak ("gravel bar") was located far inland with dwellings built above ground of turf and logs, and with inhabitants who chased the caribou in winter and fished in summer. At long distance, its characteristics could not help but be exaggerated.

To the Siberians, Kauwerak people were to be respected, for they not only were powerful and independent, but had spread over almost all of the land between Norton Sound and Kotzebue Sound. The Kauwerak people still held sway over a large territory as late as 1868 when W. H. Dall proposed calling Seward Peninsula, "Kaviak Peninsula," after his misnomer, "kaviak: red fox" for this group.

The legendary aspects of the lost Russian village reached far back into Siberian history. The first chapter began in 1648 when a contingent of Cossacks under the leadership of Simon Deshnev embarked from the mouth of the Kolyma River on the arctic coast of Siberia in seven boats for the Anadyr River. Deshnev's journey, apparently unknown to his contemporaries, was unearthed in the archives of Yakutsk by Gerhard Müller, professor of history in the St Petersburg Academy of Sciences, almost ninety years later. Müller published information about Deshnev for the first time in 1758 in volume three of *Sammlung Russischer Geschichte*, using documents based on Deshnev's controversy with another Cossack, Staduchin, in 1655, as to who was the rightful discoverer of the Anadyr, and on Deshnev's application for a pension in 1665. According to Müller, Deshnev sailed successfully through the Bering Strait to the Anadyr, but four of his boats vanished forever.

This, however, did not tally with the facts. Frank A. Golder, who examined the original documents pertaining to Deshnev's alleged journey, proved conclusively in his *Russian Expansion on the Pacific 1641-1850* that all seven boats, including Deshnev's, foundered shortly after leaving the Kolyma. Deshnev finally did reach the upper Anadyr River, but by travelling overland, not by sea. Müller's misinterpretation of Deshnev's garbled and oblique documents created a deed that did not take place, but, print has its lasting qualities, and to this day Deshnev is known as the first European to sail through Bering Strait.

Müller's suggestion of lost sailors in four boats did not bear visible fruit until 1783 when Pallas (in volume four of his *Neue Nordische Beytrage*) published a report

Pallas further elaborated on Kobelev's tale of a Russian village by explaining that the Anadyr River Russians of his time (1783) believed that a colony of shipwrecked Russians still existed in America. To show how uncertain was the knowledge of Alaska at that date, Pallas offered the hopeful suggestion that if the mysterious villagers were not Deshnev's men, perhaps they were Chirikov's (of Bering's expedition) who, in 1741, disappeared in the vicinity of Lituya Bay in southeast Alaska, or 1000 airline miles from Seward Peninsula. The Anadyr Russians' belief was said to rest on a board that a Chukchi trader had brought from America to Siberia prior to Fort Anadyr's abandonment in 1763. The board, reportedly given to a King Island Eskimo by bearded men in America, was incised on one side with red characters, and on the other, with black. If the board did exist, it almost certainly was of Eskimo manufacture because the Russian fur hunters who exploited the Aleutian Islands after Bering's voyage of 1741 did not arrive on the mainland, the Alaska Peninsula, until 1761, and the distance between their Aleutian base and northern Alaska made communications unthinkable, even for the fearless, sea-going King Islanders.

Both Kobelev and Pallas overlooked one of the most ludicrous aspects of the story—the changes that would have occurred in a Russian colony after 140 years of intermarriage with Eskimos. The shipwrecked men, lonely without women, would have married Eskimo companions, neatly erasing the Russian language, the

reading and writing of Russian script, not to mention the beards.

Despite the mistake of a non-existent Russian village, Pallas published one of the most intriguing maps ever made of western Alaska. It combines coastline data from English cartographers and Alaskan Eskimo villages from Kobelev obtained in Siberia in the Chukchi language. The territory covered by the map extends from a body of water in the position of Kotzebue Sound (unknown to Europeans at that time) to an area probably south of the Kuskokwim River. Though highly distorted, the map contains two notable features. The first is the large number of villages in two widely separated areas, Seward Peninsula and southwest Alaska, placed on the map without first-hand knowledge of the country. With the exception of a few cognate words, the Seward Peninsula village names are unintelligible to present-day Eskimos whose ancestors lived in them. Between Kotzebue Sound and Ukipan (Chukchi for King Island) 36 villages are located on the peninsula, 27 of them by name. Seven of the villages are placed on a north-flowing inland river named Gygy. Assuming that King Island is located too far south on the map (or is confused with Sledge Island), the coastline comprises at the most three-fourths of Seward Peninsula, which would indicate that a number of villages had been omitted.

The second feature is the locating of the river "Cheuweren" in print for the first time. A square symbol indicates a fort (Festung) near its headwaters. As yet no

Cook sailed through Bering Strait in 1778. J. Webber, the artist with him, depicted this view of the inhabitants of Norton Sound and their habitations. Kaviwerak and Unalit people lived around Norton Bay.

NATIONAL MUSEUM



Chukchis and their dwellings, 1815-16, drawn by Louis Choris the artist with Kotzebue. These Siberians knew about the Kauwerak people and their village, there having long been trade and raids across Bering Strait.

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES B.C.



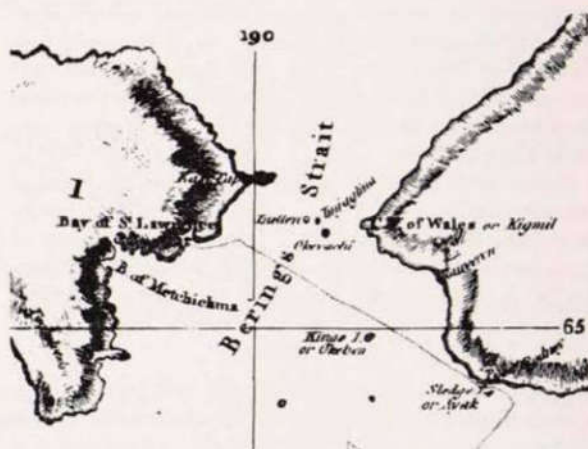
Opposite page: Part of Capt. Beechey's chart, 1826-27, with Kow e rok at the west end of Imourook (Imuruk Basin).

European had seen this river, so it is arbitrarily placed flowing into Norton Sound instead of Imuruk Basin to the north.

Martin Sauer, secretary of the Billings' expedition of 1785-94, published the second reference to the supposed Russian colony in Arctic Alaska. Sauer, an Englishman in the employ of Empress Catherine II of Russia, was actively searching for the lost Russian fort as part of his duties and, by chance, interrogated Eskimos at Cape Rodney, only 50 miles away from Kauwerak village. Sauer correctly learnt that a large river, "Ka-ooveren," flowed into a bay called "Imagru" (now Imuruk Basin) between his location at Cape Rodney and Cape Prince of Wales. The Eskimos had, however, never heard of a Russian fort, and Sauer concluded: "Notwithstanding all my endeavours, I could not find anybody that knew aught of this matter, or had ever heard of any such place existing."

A. Arrowsmith's map that accompanied Sauer's report (1802) placed "Kauveren" as a short creek in the approximate position of Port Clarence, which was not discovered until 1826 by Captain William Beechey. Strangely enough, Kotzebue's map of 1816 shows the river "Cheweren" in the same location, although Kotzebue sailed past Port Clarence without realizing it existed.

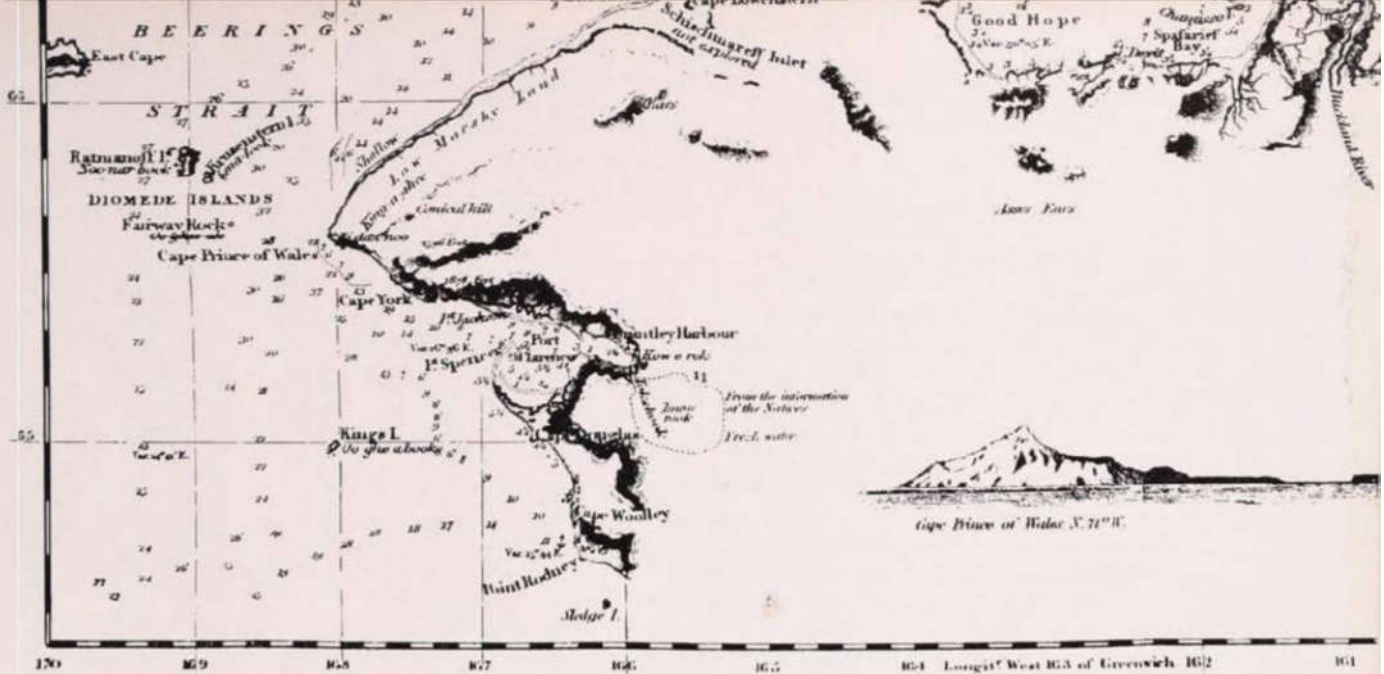
Why the officials of the Russian-American Company did not take notice of Sauer's denial of the rumoured village or of his almost correctly placed Kauveren River when they sent Korsakovski to the Nushagak in 1818 to find the "Khuiveren" was probably a result of their provincial attitude and neglect of anything printed in English. At any rate, they disregarded the information but eventually arrived at the same conclusion.



The Arrowsmith map that accompanied Martin Sauer's "Account of a Geographical . . . Expedition" 1785-94 shows the River Kauveren.

However, in 1827, while stray thoughts of the Russian village still circulated, Kauwerak at last came into its own as a well-known Eskimo settlement. Beechey discovered and named Port Clarence and Grantley Harbor, and noted the village's name "Kow-ee-rok" correctly for the first time. He also placed it on his maps as "Kow e rok" at the west end of "Imourook" rather than the east. The location is explained by a notation on the map itself: "From the information of the Natives."

Beechey, the northwest Alaskan Eskimo's first ethnographer, moulded his observations of the people living between 64° 34' N. Latitude and 71° 24' North latitude



(approximately between Nome and Point Barrow) into a lively account, writing not only about specific groups, but summarizing his material into "a few remarks upon the inhabitants". His population estimate for two summers' observation was cautious: "Allowing [the villages] to be inhabited in the winter, the whole population . . . including Kow-ee-rock, would not amount to more than 2500 persons."

It is idle to speculate why Beechey singled out Kauwerak rather than the larger Kingegan (Wales) for special emphasis in his figures. He was not unaware of the importance of Wales because he remarked, upon meeting Eskimos from there at Kotzebue Sound in September, 1827, that it was "a place which, judging from the respectability of parties from that place, whom we had seen elsewhere, must be of importance among the Esquimaux villages upon this coast". Beechey's focus on Kauwerak apparently meant that at that time it was a significant rival of Kingegan despite Kingegan's larger population.

Kauwerak blossomed next into print during the Bering Strait search for survivors of Sir John Franklin's third expedition between the years 1848 and 1854.* All of the ships that visited Port Clarence during those discouraging years were acquainted with Kauwerak because the village and its immediate neighbourhood were a storehouse of provisions and guides. At different times, both H.M.S. *Plover* and *Rattlesnake* froze in Grantley Harbor for the winter, the *Plover* first during the winter of 1850-51. Captain Henry Kellett of H.M.S. *Herald* had chosen the Port Clarence-Grantley Harbor area "as the only place south of the [Bering] straits in which the 'Plover' could be of the least assistance as a depot . . . "but," he con-

tinued, "the natives here are so numerous, certainly not so trustworthy, and more independent in their manner than the natives of Kotzebue Sound. We were visited by a great number of them. . . .

"Their principal establishment, which is said to occupy a large space on the banks of the river falling into Grantley Harbour, is called Kavyiak [Kauwerak], distant a day's journey from the Plover's anchorage."

During that winter the *Plover* obtained three tons of caribou meat and several thousand ptarmigan, in addition to fish from visiting natives and from buying trips to Kog-groo-puk, 60 miles from the ship and Ko-ve-eruk (Kauwerak) "near the large lake [Imuruk Basin] and one long day's journey from the ship".

The year before, Lieutenant Bedford Pim, temporarily attached to the *Plover*, had made a round-trip journey from its anchorage in Kotzebue Sound to St Michael to investigate rumours of ships thought to be Franklin's. En route he picked up a guide, Chief Kamokin, of Kauwerak. Kamokin was an influential man, and was so popular with the Western Union Telegraph Expedition of 1865-67 that a San Francisco schooner was named after him. At that time everyone, with the exception of W. H. Dall, thought highly of him. Frederick Whymper in *Travel and Adventure in the Territory of Alaska* (1869) said that Kamokin "was as useful to us as he had been many years before to some of the expeditions engaged in the search for Sir John Franklin;" and Henry M. Bannister, a young man of the St Michael contingent wrote in his diary: "This man is said by all to be one of the best men amongst all of the tribes of the coast. He is said to have been of great service to the English expeditions . . ." Dall, however, could not get along with

*The *Beaver*, Autumn, 1963.

Kamokin: "He was always harping on the subject [of being with Lieutenant Pim during the Franklin search] . . . A more persevering old beggar I never saw. . . ."

Kauwerak's intimacy with the Franklin searchers hit its peak in 1853-54 when the *Rattlesnake* wintered in Grantley Harbor. The *Rattlesnake's* men were a lively and inquisitive set, making numerous trips to Kauwerak and other inland villages, Cape Prince of Wales, and Kotzebue Sound. They bartered constantly for caribou and ptarmigan, even loaning guns to the Eskimos for meat on a share basis. The culmination of their roving was Acting Second Mate W. R. Hobson's overland journey in February and March 1854 to Kotzebue Sound. Hobson's journal, printed in the House of Commons Sessional Papers, is unique in the history of this area because it contains the only known record of northern Seward Peninsula inland villages printed in the Alaskan dialect. The locations are problematical, however, for Hobson did not map them and, with the exception of four villages, they are unknown to today's Eskimos. Apparently many were seasonal settlements, but in use year after year, because Commander Henry Trollope was able to give Hobson his travel orders by naming a specific route and villages, most of which his men had not yet seen.

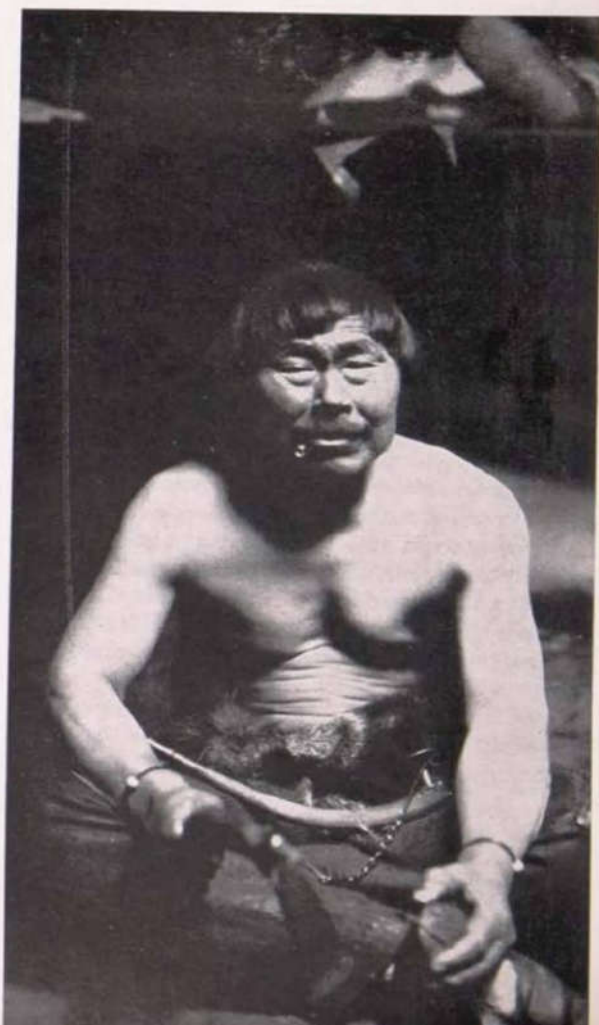
Hobson's route was an ancient one from Port Clarence to Kotzebue Sound, and "much frequented by the natives". Hobson followed his orders exactly until he came to the north-flowing Goodhope River (known to the Eskimos as the Pittock, and called thus by Hobson) instead of the Kiwalik, the "Spafarief" of his original orders. Without doubt the Pittock is also the "Gygy" of the Kobelev-Pallas map, for Kobelev's "Pyktepata" certainly is "Pittockpaga" or, in the Alaskan Eskimo language, "mouth of the Pittock". Almost everywhere that Hobson went he found "a land of plenty," caribou and ptarmigan; in some villages tons of caribou meat were cached here and there. Hobson found all seven large houses of Kauwerak empty on his visits of February 11 and March 25, the Eskimos away hunting. In March herds of caribou grazed next to the houses.

In 1866-67, the Western Union Telegraph Company's northernmost construction post in Alaska was located at Port Clarence opposite the present town of Teller. Lines were to be strung to Cape Prince of Wales and thence across the Bering Strait to Siberia. The peripatetic young men of the expedition beat quite a path from their headquarters to Kauwerak village for caribou, fish, and visiting, but despite their zeal and high spirits, did not devote much energy to describing the Eskimos' habits or villages in their various diaries and publications. W. H. Dall

Wolf dancers at the first Reindeer Fair held at Mary's Igloo in 1915. Masked 'wolves' in front wear mittens decorated with puffin beaks. In centre is the unusual box drum used only in these ceremonies; serrations topping drum are said to represent peaks of the Kigluaik Mountains where lived the eagle who taught the Wolf and Eagle dances to the Eskimos.

An elderly Eskimo of Cape Prince of Wales in his eni or semi-subterranean dwelling.

GLENBOW FOUNDATION





obtained his Seward Peninsula ethnological information for *Alaska and its Resources* from Otto de Bendeleben and William H. Ennis, who apparently had little linguistic ability. Their wayward reporting of Kauwerak's name as "Kaviak" permitted Dall to fall into the error that is still in use today.

Kauwerak declined after the 1860s, and one of my informants, born in 1896, said that only a few persons lived there during his father's boyhood. Kauwerak's population has never been accurately established for any one time, but another man told me that he had heard it once was 300. Hobson's report of "seven huts, all large," could have indicated a population from 70 to 150 at that time. Ivan Petrov, in 1880, reported 200 for "Kaviagmute" which could have indicated the village, but probably the total number of Kauwerak people on Seward Peninsula. The 1890 census reported "Kaviagmiut" as 393, a surprising gain because William H. Kelly said in the same year (in "Memoranda Concerning the Arctic Eskimos in Alaska and Siberia") that the "Kavea country is almost depopulated. . . ." The only generalization to be made from these figures is that Kauwerak was roughly one-fourth to one-half the size of Kingegan (Wales).

It is certain, however, that by the second half of the nineteenth century Kauwerak's power had been broken. Some of the Kauwerak people drifted southward to live seasonally in a village adjacent to Unalakleet. The date for this event has not been determined, but E. W. Hawkes in *The Inviting-in Feast of the Alaskan Eskimo* (1913) said that the Malemiut from Kotzebue Sound had, in following the caribou sometime in the past, pushed out the Kauwerak and Unalit people (a southern Seward Peninsula tribe). Indeed, one of my Eskimo informants said that "long ago—maybe in the 1800s" the people began to leave Kauwerak when "invaders of another country came to have war". The white man, also, brought pressures from which the village never recovered. The whalers who congregated in large numbers to trade in Kotzebue Sound after 1850 doubtless indirectly influenced the Malemiut's change of habitat, which in turn caused the Kauwerak people to suffer.

However, the glory that once was Kauwerak's—vicariously as a lost Russian outpost and actually as a great Eskimo village—had one last romantic glow during the great gold rush, entirely fitting for those glittering times. During the 1890s the flat-lands of the Kauwerak river systems were more or less abandoned. Only a few



diehards remained after the gradual loss of the wild caribou, the shift of interest after the establishment of the first school on Seward Peninsula at Wales in 1890 and the government reindeer station at Teller Reindeer Station in 1892, and the influx of traders and prospectors. Seven miles upstream from the site of old Kauwerak on the site of another ancient village, Ahveunuk, stood a lone sod hut, occupied by an Eskimo widow, named Mary, in her early twenties. Life was peaceful, and rather dull in contrast to its former bustle, but almost overnight, everything changed. Gold was found in staggering amounts on Anvil Creek in 1898, and men fell like flies upon the site of present-day Nome only to find that all the creeks had been staked in the first few weeks after the first discovery. The gold seekers, spoiling for riches, burst out of Nome again in all directions. North of Kauwerak, in the area later to be known as the Kougarok, a few men found colours on Harris Creek in March 1899. These few flakes of gold started a stampede across the snow in the dead of winter with hundreds of men pouring out of Nome without proper clothing or food. Many became sick, many starved, and many were cared for by the young woman in the hut at Ahveunuk. Like a candle in the dark, her hospitality drew the unfortunate men like moths and soon the prospectors, who had never heard of Ahveunuk, were calling her dwelling, Mary's Igloo. Mary's Igloo it has remained to this day.

Mary, who was born on the site of Nome about 1877, was orphaned at an early age, and taken by relatives to a village on the Tuksuk Channel, and later married a man from Kauwerak. The *Nome News* for 13 December 1901 said about her: "Old-timers who have mushed to the Kougarok and past the Igloo, all know Mary, and many's the poor fellow under obligations to this Eskimo woman for food and shelter during the prevalence of those severe winter storms which prevail in the upper country. And it goes, too, without saying, how astonished these mushers were when entering Mary's igloo, to find it so neat and clean, and being served with white man's cooking on white man's dishes."

(Mary of Mary's Igloo should not be confused with another equally famous Eskimo woman called Reindeer Mary or Sinrock Mary, the wife of Antesilook—the first Alaskan Eskimo to own a herd of tame reindeer.)

Mary's Igloo, itself, was to undergo a metamorphosis. More men arrived. More gold was discovered in the Kougarok, and Mary's Igloo, at the head of steamboat navigation and on the winter trail to the new Eldorados, was bound to become a boom town. A dozen little mining camps popped up all over the area in 1900 and 1901, but only Teller and Mary's Igloo survived as towns to this day. The *Nome Gold Digger* announced on 13 February 1901 that Mary's Igloo was being surveyed. "Choice lots have been staked but lot jumpers have not descended upon the Igloo as yet. Business lots are being held at from \$1000 to \$2500 but the real estate market is a little dull at present."

The *Nome News* reported on 22 May 1901: "Mary's Igloo is Booming. Considerable activity the last two weeks. Overland rivers not expected to break up for ten days at least. Present population estimated at 200 of whom 20 are women." A saloon, a general merchandise store, a bakery, a roadhouse, a laundry, and a hotel were under consideration.

The *Teller News* printed a letter to the editor from Mary's Igloo, 4 July 1901: "The river is now down to low water mark . . . everybody is getting ready to build as soon as we can get lumber, all confident that the town of Mary's Igloo is located on the only natural town site on the Kuzatreim [Kuzitrin] river. The rival towns are located—one—two miles below here with a population of about a dozen people, the other is four miles above steamboat navigation with a population of seven or eight people. The present population of Mary's Igloo is about 200 and growing fast."

Mary's Igloo grew fast on paper only, for within a year or so the town, as a mining camp, had collapsed. However, Kauwerak Eskimos whose families had left their home grounds many years before began to return, and Mary's Igloo became a bustling little Eskimo village. In 1907

Left: Mary's Igloo in the gold rush days of 1901, with the Kigluaik Mountains in the background. From a photograph by E. A. Hegg in the University of Washington Library.



Mary, after whom Mary's Igloo is named, photographed a few months before her death in the early 1940s.

Part of the Igloo reindeer herd at the second Fair held at Pilgrim Hot Springs. GLENBOW FOUNDATION

Wales village, or Kingegan, Cape Prince of Wales, probably in the mid-1920s, from the Andrews photograph collection. UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

the United States Bureau of Education built a school to take over a Lutheran Mission that had been in operation for several years. The new school at Mary's Igloo (often called just Igloo) drew Eskimo families from a large area. The school and village thrived and in January 1915 Mary's Igloo was chosen as the site of the first Alaskan Reindeer Fair. Headquarters were in an enormous tent erected about four miles upstream near a famous hot spring. Eskimos convened to learn more about the industry and to compete for prizes in lassoing, driving, and breaking deer. The last large trading festival was celebrated at the same time, with white men and women from Nome in attendance. In 1918, the Jesuit fathers built an orphanage near the hot spring, known now as Pilgrim Hot Springs. It was abandoned during World War II.

In 1923 the Lutheran missionary from Mary's Igloo moved her little band to another bend of the river. Pulling buildings on the river ice in the winter, and boating down the furniture in the summer, Eskimo men created another substantial little town called New Igloo. Only eight persons remained in Mary's Igloo. New Igloo became the new centre of the Kauwerak universe but in 1949 it was entirely abandoned. Some of the inhabitants went to Nome, some to Teller, and some, back to Mary's Igloo.

Today Mary's Igloo is only a ghost of its last big gesture as a reincarnation of Kauwerak. The mining has dwindled to almost nothing, the reindeer industry (once represented by three large Mary's Igloo herds) ranges from Teller, the school is closed. Mary's Igloo is not listed in the latest census report, but it has a spot on the map, and a few families, on the once-rich caribou grounds of Kauwerak, still call it home, living off the land as best they can. ♦





Power lines cross the arctic tundra.

Land of the Chukchi Today

BY TIKHON SYOMUSHKIN

BACK IN THE 1920s, I came to Chukotski Peninsula with a small group of Soviet officials. I had to travel by dogsleds more than 900 miles along the Arctic shore, from Cape Dezhnev (East Cape) to the present-day borders of the Yakut Autonomous Republic to the west.

The dogsled sped on across the vast snow-bound expanse, past the yarangas—the primitive Chukchi dwellings covered with reindeer and walrus skins. There was not a single school, medical centre or well-built house to offer us shelter or a cup of hot tea. At rare intervals we saw the cabins of foreign residents who came to the land to get the valuable pelts—the gold of Chukotka. The "cultural heritage" of the past was represented by eleven small churches, 32 chapels, and 72 shamans, those evil helpmates of death. I felt a pang whenever I had occasion to observe the miserable life of the sparse aboriginal population.

Today the land of the Chukchi—the Chukotski National Area—has changed beyond recognition. Anadyr District alone has a large hospital, three out-patient clinics, five medical stations and a centre for the prevention and cure of tuberculosis. These medical institutions have special aircraft at their disposal.

In the past four years 1,460 one-family houses were built for the Chukchi and Eskimo collective farmers. One aboriginal family in every three has moved into well-appointed dwellings. The dirty, unsanitary yarangas devoid of light and air are disappearing.

Mr Syomushkin is a Soviet writer and State Prize Winner. Photographs by Novosti Press Agency.



Seventeen-year-old Galina Anakhak of Uelen on East Cape creates designs on walrus tusks.

Buildings to house elementary and secondary schools are constructed everywhere; specialized secondary schools and courses are established. The Chukchi and the Eskimos today have their national intelligentsia—doctors, engineers, chemists, zootechnicians, artists and writers. The first Chukchi author, Yuri Rytkeu, is quite popular and his books are well known.

The main occupation of the coastal population is hunting sea mammals—whale, walrus, and seal. The precarious skin-covered canoes have been superseded by the motor boats and seiners of the collective farms. Recurring



Building in Anadyr village. Many Chukchis now have well appointed houses.



First poet of Chukotsk, Antonia Kymytval, with her husband on a fishing expedition. A Chukchi scientist employed at the Institute of Rare Metals in Magadan, and the editor of the Chukotka Radio.

famine is now a thing of the past, dimly remembered.

The reindeer herds of the collective farms in the mountains and the tundra of the peninsula run into hundreds of thousands of head. The achievements of zootechnics are widely employed in reindeer breeding.

In the past, while travelling on dogsleds or reindeer sleds across the vast silent tundra reminiscent of the boundless ocean, I would get the feeling of being alone in the world together with my guide. I could not find my bearings in the tundra. The guide's directions would clash with the indications of the compass and with the primitive map, full of blank spots, but he invariably proved right. According to the guide, one could not go by compass in Chukchi land. At that time, forty years ago, I decided that there must be some valid reason for the misbehaviour of my compass. I proved right. Today the country has several mining and metallurgical plants, concentration mills and mines where precious metals and ores are extracted. In the geologists' opinion, there also ought to be oil.

The tundra of the Chukotski Peninsula has been cut through by roads stretching for scores of miles. They

provide passage for powerful motor cars, sometimes travelling in groups of 40 or more, and carrying steel constructions, prefabricated parts of houses, materials for the mines and concentration mills, and foodstuffs.

The mining and concentration combine of Iultin District produces tungsten and tin. Bilibin District is known for its gold mines; Chaun District has a mining board, set up on the basis of its concentration mills and mines. In the other districts the population engages in hunting fur-bearing animals and sea mammals, and in reindeer breeding; animal-breeding farms are set up.

In former times, only three or four ships would visit the peninsula during the navigation season, and these had to be unloaded in the roads. Today about a hundred ships annually call at the well-mechanized ports of Pevek (Chaun Bay), Provideniya, Egvekinot, Anadyr, and at other ports. The developing industry of the land and the Northern Sea Route along the Arctic coast brought into being these new towns and communities.

The land of the Chukchi is far removed from what it used to be, and its progress is attracting active young people in ever greater numbers. ♦

First Steamboats on the Saskatchewan

BY BRUCE PEEL

*Librarian of the University
of Alberta at Edmonton.*

THE POSSIBILITY of placing steamboats on the Saskatchewan to replace York boats was discussed for many years before it became a reality. In 1858 a member of the Hind exploring expedition coming down-river met the Saskatchewan brigade of fourteen boats at Cross Lake bringing up the fall outfit of goods. Chief Factor Christie, in charge of the H B C brigade, hoped that the "long talked of steamers" would soon make their appearance on Lake Winnipeg thus shortening the tedious annual journey of the Saskatchewan and Athabasca brigades.

The explorer was John Fleming who had examined the Saskatchewan by boat from the Elbow of the South Branch. At the mouth of the main river, Grand Rapids was a barrier to steamboats entering from Lake Winnipeg. Fleming reported:

To navigate the Saskatchewan at present, a steamer would evidently have either to be built above the rapid, hauled over the portage, or 'warped' up the rapid itself. Seeing that the Company's large bateaux are hauled up the rapid by manual labour, it does not seem impracticable for an empty steamboat, with engines of great power, to ascend it, by the aid of hawsers and guy-ropes stretched from the steamer to the land, using, along with capstans, the motive power of the steamer as far as available.

As for the three smaller rapids in the fourteen miles above Grand Rapids, Fleming expressed the opinion

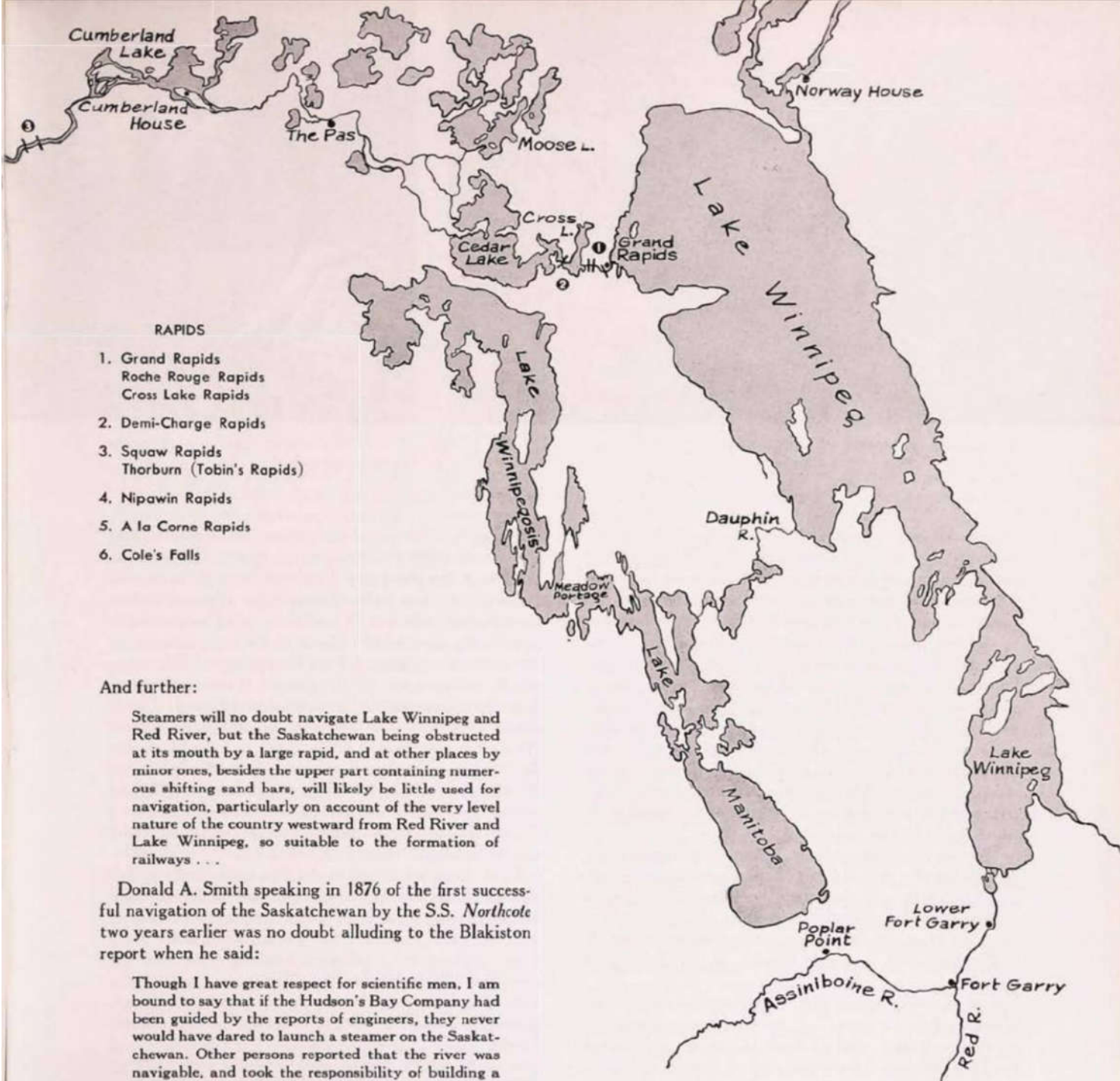


that powerful steamers under their own power could ascend the Demi-Charge, Cross Lake, and Roche Rouge Rapids.

Another exploring expedition in Rupert's Land the same season as the Hind expedition was that of Captain Palliser, one of whose members, Lieutenant Blakiston, R.A., submitted a report on the navigability of the Saskatchewan. In October 1857 Blakiston ascended the river to Carlton House, and in October of the following year he descended the river from Fort Edmonton to its mouth. The river is usually at its lowest during this season of the year, so that it is not surprising that Blakiston reported unfavourably. He questioned whether the Thorburn (Tobin's) Rapids could be climbed by steamer even in high water, but he thought the Nipawin Rapids could. Of Cole's Falls he said that it was impassable in low water, but added that "those who have seen these rapids at high water think they would be no obstruction".

Blakiston's report on the navigability of the main and north branch of the Saskatchewan concluded on a sceptical note:

Of the distance to which a steamer would ascend in high water, I can give no positive information, but I should suppose that one adapted for this kind of navigation might possibly reach Fort Edmonton, but in low water little could be accomplished in most parts.



And further:

Steamers will no doubt navigate Lake Winnipeg and Red River, but the Saskatchewan being obstructed at its mouth by a large rapid, and at other places by minor ones, besides the upper part containing numerous shifting sand bars, will likely be little used for navigation, particularly on account of the very level nature of the country westward from Red River and Lake Winnipeg, so suitable to the formation of railways . . .

Donald A. Smith speaking in 1876 of the first successful navigation of the Saskatchewan by the S.S. *Northcote* two years earlier was no doubt alluding to the Blakiston report when he said:

Though I have great respect for scientific men, I am bound to say that if the Hudson's Bay Company had been guided by the reports of engineers, they never would have dared to launch a steamer on the Saskatchewan. Other persons reported that the river was navigable, and took the responsibility of building a steamer at a cost of fifty or sixty thousand dollars.

After the Fleming and Blakiston surveys of the river, the next report on its navigability was made by two steamboat men from the Red River. They were Captain Silas Munn and Pilot E. R. Hutchinson of the steamer *International* which then plied between Georgetown, Minnesota, and Fort Garry. The survey was instituted by the Hudson's Bay Company. The trip of the river men up the Saskatchewan as far as Carlton House was

made by rowboat in October 1865. The river was low, and beginning to freeze over, so that even in a rowboat the journey was completed only with great difficulty.

Captain Munn's report described the river as a good navigable stream from Grand Rapids to Thorburn Rapids. It is surprising that his report did not take cognizance of the problem of navigation west of Cumberland Lake for here the water of the main channel was



An artist's conception of Grand Rapids, from an engraving in "Picturesque Canada" 1882.



The H B C Grand Rapids post, at the foot of the rapids.

often dissipated in rivulets which lost themselves in the vast off-shore swamp; years later the vagaries of the channel in this stretch of river would do more than any other factor to destroy steamboat transportation on the Saskatchewan. From Thorburn Rapids to Carlton House he did not find the river navigable at that season of the year, but he had been assured by Chief Trader Arthur Pruden, who was in charge of Carlton, that the water was three and a half feet higher from June 1st to September 15th. Munn's conclusion was that "with this additional water, I am of the opinion that light draught steamers could be sent as far as I explored it without any serious difficulty." The captain noted that the river was well wooded, affording an abundance of cordwood with which to stoke the steamers.

The one river improvement Munn recommended was the sinking of a pier at Cross Lake, presumably as something to which a hawser could be attached to help an up-bound steamer climb Cross Lake Rapids to enter the lake. These rapids had a narrow steamboat channel, and a thirty-inch drop in a distance of ten chains (660 feet).

Several years elapsed after the Munn report before the Hudson's Bay Company, as part of a reorganization of its transport routes and methods, launched a steamer on the Saskatchewan. The competition of cheaper American goods at Red River made company officials appreciate the strategic location of Fort Garry as an entrepôt for the Great North West. After 1875 goods for the Saskatchewan country and beyond came through Fort Garry, and York Factory went into a decline. By this time also the steamboat had replaced the York boat on the Lake Winnipeg-Saskatchewan River water route.

The beginning of this transport reorganization occurred during the period Donald A. Smith was the

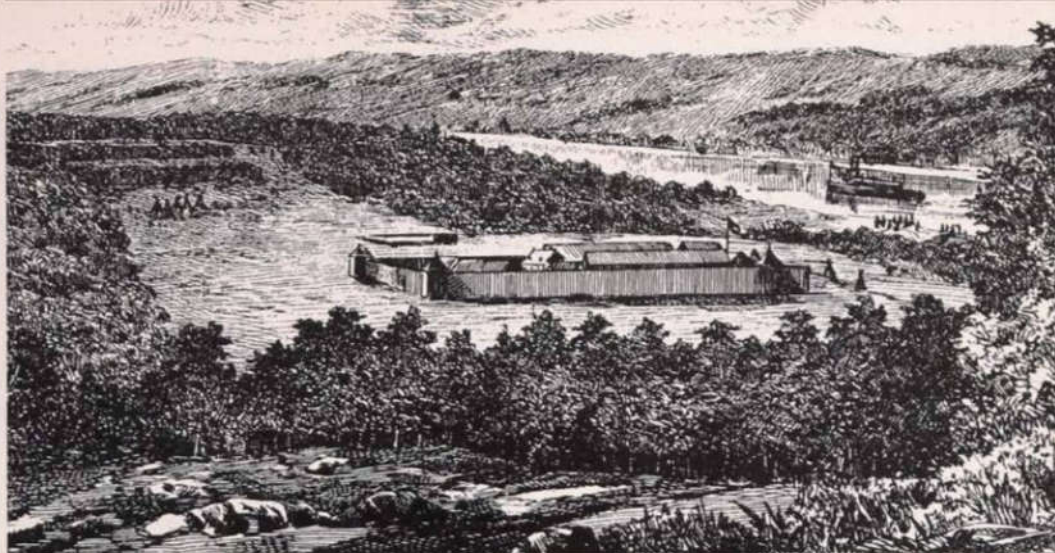
Company's Chief Commissioner, and no doubt the new plan owed much to his initiative. Smith had a strong preference for the Lake Manitoba-Lake Winnipeg route rather than Lake Winnipeg for steamers sailing for the Saskatchewan. His scheme, as he expounded it some years later in the House of Commons, was that river steamers might sail from Fort Garry to Edmonton via the former route thus by-passing the rough water of Lake Winnipeg and the barrier of Grand Rapids, if three canals were built. The first canal would cut across from the Assiniboine River at Poplar Point to Lake Manitoba. At Meadow Portage between Lakes Manitoba and Winnipegosis another canal three-eighths of a mile long would be required. At the northern end of the lake a four-mile canal across Mossy Portage would let boats out on the Saskatchewan at Cedar Lake.

In the implementation of the plan to connect the Red with the Saskatchewan, a screw steamer with one funnel was built at Lower Fort Garry during the winter of 1871-72. On 7 June 1872 she was launched, Miss Mary Flett breaking the traditional bottle of wine over her bow and christening her the *Chief Commissioner*. The name was no doubt in honour of Donald A. Smith. Sometime during the navigation season the new steamer tried to reach Lake Manitoba from Lake Winnipeg, but was unable to get through by the Dauphin River (then called the Little Saskatchewan), and so was doomed to sail the rough waters of Lake Winnipeg for which her shallow draught was unsuited.

On the Saskatchewan above Grand Rapids construction began on a sternwheel steamer in 1872 or early in 1873. It is a safe assumption that the hull, lumber, and machinery were brought in from Minnesota to Fort Garry and transhipped on the *Chief Commissioner* across Lake Winnipeg. The new river vessel was 142 feet in

Carlton House with the steamer "Northcote" in the river beyond, from a sketch by M. Bastien, 1877.

PUBLIC ARCHIVES



length with a 22-foot beam. On 7 June 1873 the news received at Fort Garry was that the new steamer was approaching completion, but she was not ready to sail until the beginning of August.

Such was the haste in getting the steamer into service in order that the fall supplies and trade goods could be moved into the vast Saskatchewan and Arctic regions that the ship sailed unchristened and without ceremony. Anyone familiar with the superstitions associated with ships would have known that she would come to a bad end. The new boat successfully mounted the Roche Rouge and Cross Lake Rapids, but she came to grief in the next one, less than fourteen miles from her starting point.

In the Demi-Charge Rapids, so called because the York boats were tracked up with half cargoes, the river in 230 yards fell five and a half feet. The rapids were divided by a large island. The north channel, about 650 yards in width, was the one followed by the York boats. Years before, John Fleming had predicted that if the channel were cleared of boulders the rapids "might be ascended by powerful steamers"; it was on these boulders that the

first steamer was wrecked. A newspaper account written some years later describes the difficulty of warping steamers up the Demi-Charge:

... a heavy piece of water, which it often takes the steamer a full day to ascend, the rope used being a mile and a quarter in length, having to be carried across a lake at the head of the rapids and fastened to trees on the opposite shore.

In trying to climb the Demi-Charge the sternwheeler pushed her steam pressure up to 145 pounds to the square inch, but she could not breast the current. She then had to be warped up. The rope broke. She struck a rock, and her wood being soft and her cargo heavy, a large hole was stove in her bottom. She sank immediately. Donald A. Smith, speaking in the House of Commons on the navigability of the Saskatchewan, attributed the cause of this wreck not to the difficulty of navigation, but to "some misunderstanding between the captain and the officer" in the signalling of directions.

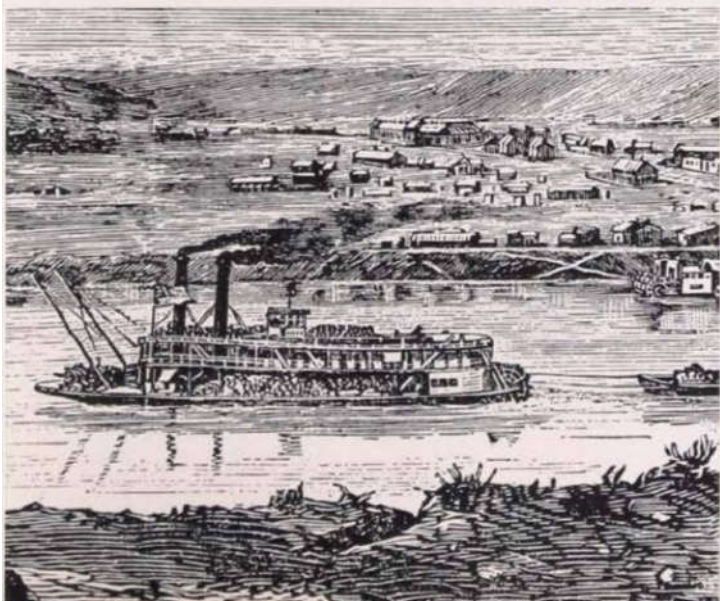
Chief Factor Robert Hamilton, who was aboard, took command of salvage operations, and by great exertion a considerable part of the cargo, consisting of dry goods and hardware, was saved. There were two hundred kegs of sugar aboard; some of the sugar was saved by reboiling and evaporating over camp fires. The dry goods included the yearly dressmaking requirements of all the Indian women from The Pas to Hudson Hope. The bolts of cloth were spread out to dry on the trees and bushes of the island dividing the rapids, and to this day it is known as Calico Island.

At The Pas, the Rev. Henry Budd, Indian clergyman of the Church Missionary Society, recorded in his diary the effect of the wreck on the life of that community.

Sunday, August 10, 1873—Two Indians arrived from the Grand Rapids and brought a letter from Mr. Hamilton, Esq. from Cross Lake to the effect that the new steamer built for the Saskatchewan was wrecked in Cross Lake Falls, and some assistance

In 1885 the S.S. "Northcote" was on the South Saskatchewan at Medicine Hat.

GLENDOW FOUNDRY





The Rev. Henry Budd was in the early '70s at Christ Church, The Pas (above) known as the Cumberland missionary station. The sketch was made by John Fleming during his reconnaissance of the Saskatchewan.

wanted in boats to help carry the cargo up to Fort Defiance . . .

August 11— . . . The Co. sent off a boat early this morning to the assistance of the wrecked steamer.

August 13— . . . The Co. boat have started again for the wreck. They have now cleared away all the men from the village. Early in the morning a boat from Cumberland Ho. arrived. It is bound for the wreck.

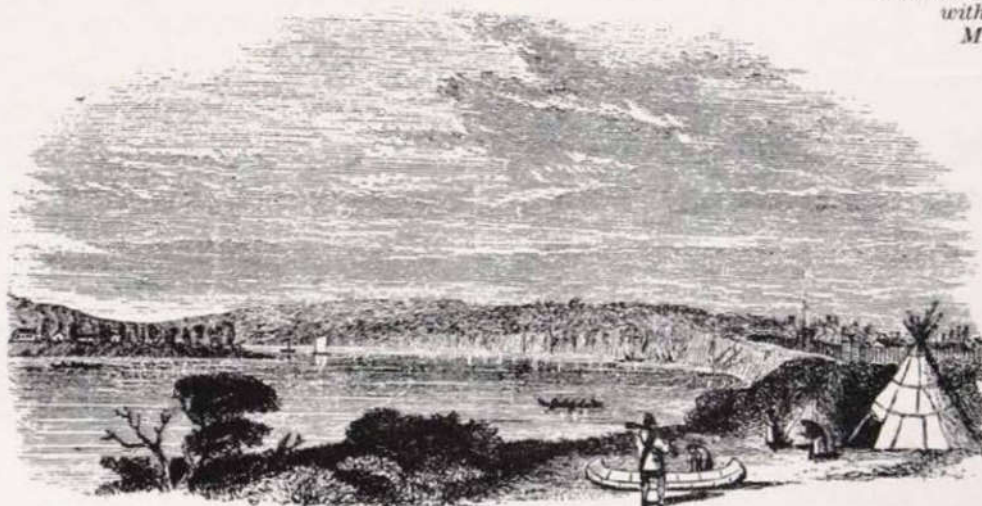
Later in the season, a member of the Geological Survey of Canada, Alfred R. C. Selwyn, reported seeing the wreck of the first steamer lying below the Roche Rouge Rapids some eight or ten feet above the water. Apparently the Hudson's Bay men had got her downstream that far. The report of the Governor and Committee of the Honourable Company to a shareholders' meeting in London on November 25 stated:

Her engines and machinery were saved and will be available for another boat, which will be built at Lake Winnipeg early next season. This loss has caused much disappointment, as the difficulties of obtaining transport by the old methods are gradually increasing.

The Manitoban of Winnipeg, on 11 October reported that provisions and goods of every description were scarce on the upper Saskatchewan partly because of the loss of the steamer and the failure to get her cargo into the country. The Hudson's Bay Company, late in the season, despatched trains of carts overland from Red River with the much-needed supplies.

The next season another steamer was built above Grand Rapids to replace the one wrecked in the Demi-Charge Rapids.

Fort a la Corne, right, with Nepowewin Mission across the river.



In its issue of 23 May 1874 the *Manitoban* carried the following news of the importation from Minnesota of further lumber for a new steamer.

The *International* has just brought down 15,000 addition feet of lumber for the new Hudson Bay steamer, which is to be put on the Saskatchewan to replace that which so disastrously came to grief on her trial trip last year. The lumber, hull, etc. will be forwarded to Grand Rapids by the *Chief Commissioner*. And Captain Aymond, who is to have command, is, we learn sanguine of making one or two trips to Edmonton this year.

The new sternwheeler was similar in construction and design to steamboats to be seen on the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, with her forecastle cut down to the main or boiler deck, two tall smokestacks well forward, and the pilot-house behind them on the hurricane deck. The steamboat was 150 feet from bow to stern, 28.5 feet in breadth, and 4.5 feet deep. She was constructed of wood, and driven by two horizontal high-pressure engines manufactured by C. J. Dymont of Cincinnati, Ohio, and capable of generating 39.72 horsepower. Her gross tonnage was 461.34, while her registered tonnage was 290.63. With a light cargo her draught was 22 inches, but with a load of 150 tons she drew 3.5 feet of water. Her capital value (in 1875) was \$52,721.36.

The new steamer was duly christened the *Northcote* in honour of Sir Stafford Henry Northcote, later Earl of Iddesleigh, who was governor of the Hudson's Bay Company from March 1869 to March 1874.

The S.S. *Northcote* sailed the third week of August, Captain Aymond in command. The steamer's first port of call was at The Pas, 140 miles upstream. Her arrival was noted with enthusiasm by the Rev. Henry Budd in his journal.

August 26, 1874—The long expected steamer "North-Cote" came puffing up in sight. They blew the whistle so loud they made the very cattle rear up their heels, and took to full gallop with their tails up in the air in full speed to the woods. But, not only the cattle but the people of all ages and sexes were no less excited at the sight of the boat, the first boat of the kind to be seen by them all their life; in fact, the first steam boat going in this river since the Creation.

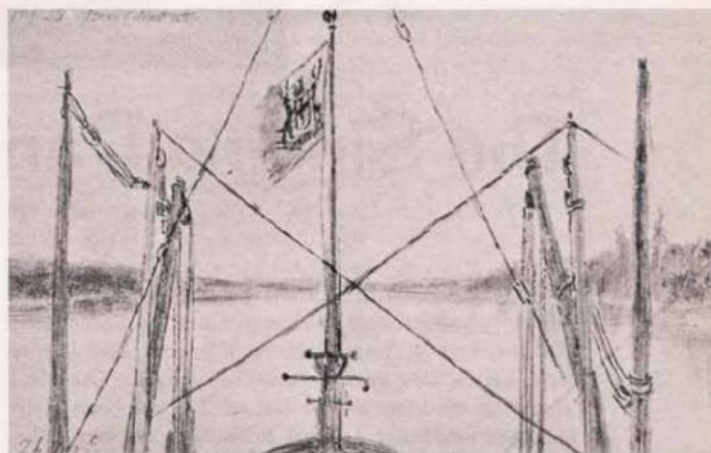
Four days later the Sunday peace of the Indian settlement at Nepowewin Mission, across the river from Fort à la Corne, and 240 miles above The Pas, was shattered by the whistle of the steamboat. The native catechist, Mr B. Constant, noted in his journal the arrival of the steamer in the afternoon and the cancellation of the evening service because the congregation were all down

looking at the new wonder that had suddenly appeared.

Twelve days out from Grand Rapids the *Northcote* reached her destination. Carlton House, nearly 490 miles upriver.

Chief Factor Alex Matheson writing from The Pas had this to say about the *Northcote's* return voyage:

She came back from Carlton all safe, though experiencing much more difficulty coming down stream than in going up. It is a delicate task to steer a huge leviathan like the *Northcote* in stony, crooked rapids, and it is the opinion of those who pretend to have some knowledge of the subject that there can't be certainty of final success until some boulders or other obstacles in the Nepowin and Coal Falls



The Saskatchewan between Carlton House and Prince Albert over the bow of the "Northcote" sketched by Sydney Hall in '81 when the steamer was carrying the Governor-General, the Marquis of Lorne. The H B C coat of arms flag is being flown.

PUBLIC ARCHIVES

Rapids are removed. The steamer is now in winter quarters at Grand Rapids with the captain watching her, and putting up buildings for warehouse purposes at each end of the portage.

Meantime the news of the first successful voyage up the Saskatchewan River had reached the outside world, and drew this optimistic forecast from the *St. Paul Press*:

Some years ago the press was accustomed to enlarge on the prospect of navigation from Breckenridge or Georgetown on the Red in this state [Minnesota], through Lake Winnipeg and the North Saskatchewan to Fort Edmonton at the foot of the Rocky Mountains... The steamboat just launched on the Saskatchewan is the forerunner of a great fleet of steam craft which is hereafter to navigate this long line of waterways.

by Helen C. Howes

MIK



The Singing Dancing Greenlanders

THE GROUP CALLED MIK (which means party) came into being almost by chance. Knud Wissum, Doctor of Music and producer at Radio Denmark, had just returned from two years' service with Radio Greenland when the director of the Italian Tourist Bureau approached him for something different to represent Denmark at the San Remo Flower Festival. Wissum knew many young Greenlanders who had been selected by the Ministry of Greenlandic Affairs for special study in Denmark, the mother country. It was logical, therefore, that Eskimo folk songs and dances should come to mind as the "something unique" required for the festival. Wissum chose a double quartet of Greenlanders and trained them. Two months later, in January 1962, their first performance was a tremendous success. The troupe now numbers 22, accompanied by the dance-violinist, Henry Hansen or, on special occasions, his Folk Dance Quartet.

The Greenlanders are fine looking, and the girls gay in their Eskimo dress. Most have high cheek bones, white to honey-toned skin, glossy black hair done in modern style, and up-slanting dark eyes—attractive natural attributes set off to advantage by picturesque costumes of sealskin trousers, red jackets, white knee-high boots, brightly embroidered and lace-banded, broad striped sash and short fur-collared capes of brilliant pearl beadwork. All this colour, topped by a flashing smile, makes a very

pretty combination indeed. The men, strong, stockily built and handsome, are more sedately dressed. Their features show Eskimo traits, heritage of the Greenlanders' Eskimo and European forbears.

If MIK impressed the Italians at San Remo, the Greenlanders were no less impressed. They rode on the floats covered with flowers and as they passed through the streets carnations were tossed to them with shouts of *Viva gli eschimesi!*

The troupe also performed on Italian TV and returned home to fill engagements. Since then they have been in constant demand for town festivals, clubs, folkdance evenings, TV appearances, national and international congresses at home and abroad. Everywhere they were acclaimed by both audience and press for their charming songs and gay dances, performed with precision and, even more important, their so-evident joy. They made films for use on TV and a record "The Songs of Greenland," and moved north to Norway and Sweden for more public appearances.

They sing about their beautiful country, ice-bound for eight months of the year, and the 24-hour summer days. They sing of the aurora borealis, magnificent arctic sunsets, long, hard winter and joy of spring's return. They sing of the sled dog, friend of man and the only possible means of transportation in some areas. They sing of whale hunts, the polar bear, walrus and seal on the ice

Miss Howes, McGill graduate and free-lance writer, lives in Montreal and travels widely, first meeting the Greenlandic singers in Copenhagen.

foes. They sing of young love and broken hearts, children's nonsense songs and old Eskimo legends. The music is extremely melodious and Wissum has trained his choir well. The group performs the dance of the drums, skill with the dog whip in steering the team, the Norsemen's invasions, and whalers' dances. These may have come to Greenland through Scottish, Dutch, or even Canadian whalers who landed on the island.

The background of these young people adds to the interest of their achievement.

Greenland's associations with Scandinavia go back a thousand years before our time, but the year 1721 is generally regarded as marking the beginning of her modern development. That year, a Norwegian-Danish minister, Hans Egede, and his wife began missionary work there.

Through continuous occupation, and finally through pronouncements by the International Court of Justice in 1933, Denmark's right to Greenland was acknowledged by the world. It is now an integral part of Denmark and no longer a colony. The Danes' aim has always been not only to assist Greenlanders to achieve the fullest possible life, but to protect them from any disadvantages that might accrue from too early exposure to a more sophisticated civilization. Until World War II the island was closed to outsiders who had no special business there.

The introduction of Parliamentary democracy in Denmark meant that democracy had also to be introduced into Greenland. In the 1860s the first step was taken when local "trusteeship" councils of Danish officials and elected Greenland representatives were set up in each district. In 1908 a law provided for two District Councils in West Greenland, one for the north and one for the south. (The east coast is very sparsely settled.) The Councils' responsibility was increased by an Act of 1925 which led to new legislation in 1950. A Royal Commission was set up to study all aspects of Greenland life and

extensive exploration was also carried out. Since 1951, all men and women over 23 have voted for their National Council, and Greenland is represented in the Danish Parliament by two elected members. Acts were passed providing free State education, free medical, hospital and social services, and to promote independent economic development.

Since public education is the foundation of any democratic social revolution, the Danish administration has always made an effort to provide the best possible education and facilities for training Greenland's leaders. Besides the free schools, where the two languages Greenlandic and Danish are used, and the training college in Greenland, government subsidies provide opportunity for more advanced training in Denmark.

During the last century the social life of Greenland has undergone a complete change which started with the transition from a natural economy based on hunting and nomadic life to a money economy based on fishing, sheep farming, mining and settlement. The nomadic life is almost a thing of the past in western Greenland. Except in the far north and on the east coast there is little hunting by kayak. The fisherman, now clad in long rubber boots and oilskins, leaves the harbour in his motor boat or cutter to bring back a boatload of cod, shrimp, or the odd whale. While the women still clean and take the fish to the depot, their occupation is much more diversified. They may be government-trained midwives, shop assistants, clerks, dressmakers, nurses, hair-dressers.

In the larger settlements their homes will no longer be stone-and-sod structures but well furnished frame houses, with radio and electricity. There are community meeting houses, libraries, film shows. Clothing too has become European and the traditional costume is worn by the women only on special occasions.

With these changes at home, the move to Denmark did not require an extreme readjustment in the lives of the

Right: Eskimo drum song performed by Carl Berthel Lynge and Knud Kleist.

Opposite page: The MIK troupe with Knud Wissum, director, and Henry Hansen, dance-violinist.

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, COPENHAGEN





students. True, there were more luxuries, larger stores, the cultural opportunities afforded by Copenhagen's museums, art galleries, and theatres. But at home they had the essentials and in coming to Denmark they were continuing the education and training already begun. Most parents—or perhaps it was grandparents—had already given up the old mode of life and the father was likely to be a skilled worker with a steady job.

Some of the personal histories of the young people of MIK tell the story.

Consider Itanguak Jensen. His father is a member of parliament and the president of the council of Thule in northern Greenland. Here men in trousers of white bear skin hunt for a living, and babies are still carried in an amaut on the mother's back. After graduating from high school and college, Itanguak decided for the priesthood instead of a teaching career and has free residence at Ehlers Kollegium in Copenhagen. Although he had trouble with Latin and Hebrew, he hopes to graduate in 1966 and return to Greenland.

Mathilde Moeller's father is a master carpenter. Mathilde went to Denmark as apprentice in a beauty-parlour, earning \$5 a week for the first year. She will finish her training by 1966 and "Who knows, perhaps some day I'll open my own salon in Greenland?" In the meantime, she sings and dances with MIK, the youngest of the troupe.

Peter Geisler's father is office manager at a coal-mine. Peter clerked in an electric appliance store until, after a few shocks and short circuits, he decided to become an electrician. He was sent to Copenhagen for training and now has his papers, a job, and is paying off the loan.

Jonathan Motzfeldt's father is a seal-hunter, a skilled and remunerative occupation. He taught his son to hunt, but Jonathan graduated as a teacher with marks so high that without trying matriculation examinations he was accepted by the Faculty of Theology, University of Copenhagen. After studying in Rome on scholarship, he is doing postgraduate work in Copenhagen, is president of the Eskimo Society, sings and dances with MIK. When he returns home as a priest, he means to establish more meeting-houses for the people.

Grete Larsen's father, a ship's carpenter, sent Grete to Denmark where she first worked as maid and then as dental receptionist. Skill with her hands brought Grete recognition and she became technical-apprentice at a dental laboratory on a government grant. Grete is now earning "a very nice salary" and looks forward to being "absolutely free of debt" when she finishes her training.

Sofie Lennert, daughter of a chief clerk, spent a year in Denmark before attending a school for housekeeping. With her goal a dietitian's job in a Greenland hospital, Sofie works in a hospital all morning in return for room and board, and in the afternoon struggles with a full



These stonecut prints by Kale Rosing, a Greenlander, depict Eskimo legends typical of the MIK song stories: a shaman puts a spell on a hunter's kayak and, far left, Mother of the Sea, her hair flowing around her, is surrounded by the creatures upon which life depends.

course at the Institute of Technology. Any spare time is devoted to MIK, and attending theatres and museums.

Carl Berthel Lynge, son of a telegraphist in Umanak, North Greenland, can drive a dog-sled and hunt in a kayak but he became a teacher. His real world, however, is music—voice and piano. He lacked sufficient theoretical background for success at the Royal Conservatory of Music, so moved on to Greenland Radio Division in Copenhagen. Here he broadcasts in both languages, selects music and songs, and is a key member of the MIK troupe.

Ena Stenberg is the daughter of a Greenland missionary, married to a Danish Navy lieutenant, and has three sons. Ena trained as midwife and nurse in Godthaab (the largest Greenland community) and learnt housekeeping and child-care in Denmark. Since Ena knows an enormous number of old Greenland songs, she is one of MIK's mainstays.

Peter Rosing is a technician with Radio Denmark and is learning to plan, direct, make sound pictures, and other skills to enable him to improve bilingual broadcasting on Radio Greenland.

Christian Egede was brought up on a farm in the green valleys of southern Greenland—the section which gave the island its name. Christian studied applied mechanics at the Mariners Institute and is now apprentice in Copenhagen. When he has finished his machinists'

course, he wants to spend some time at sea before settling down in Greenland.

Then there is Magdaline Jensen who began nurse's training in Greenland and specialized in baby nursing at the Infants Home and Day Nursery near Copenhagen. Qualified children's nurses are needed badly in North Greenland so Magdaline is looking forward to helping fill this gap. Besides singing and dancing with MIK, Magdaline and Grete Larsen study English.

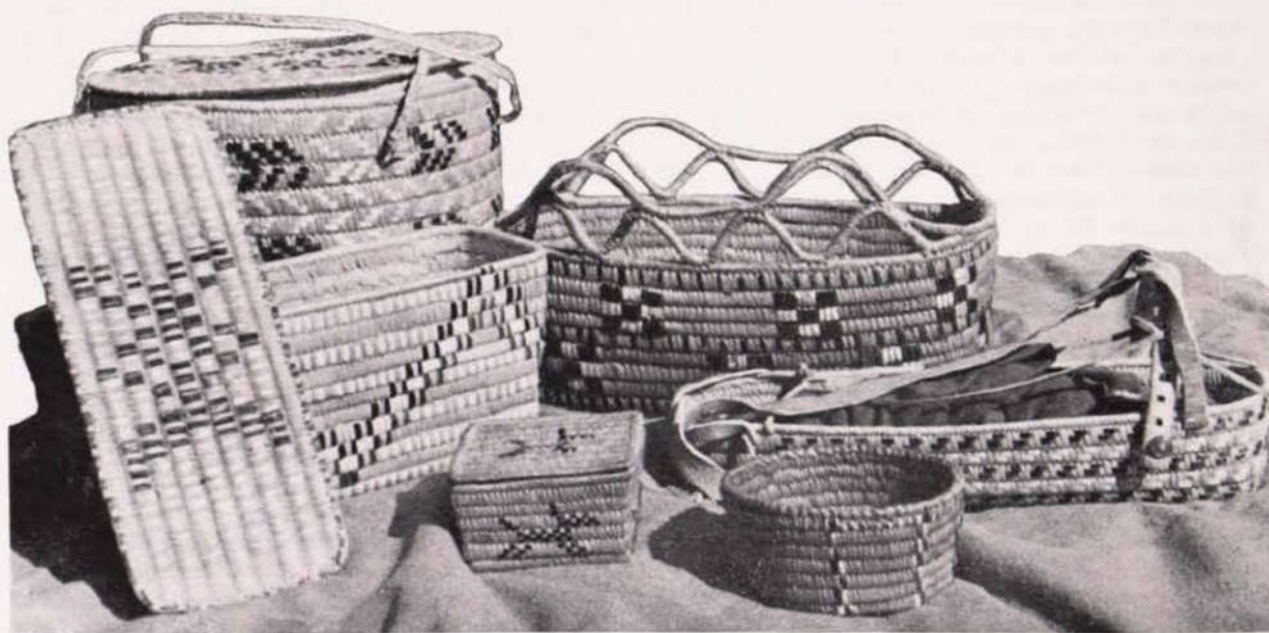
Practically all of the members will return to Greenland when their education or apprenticeship is completed; they are eager to launch into the work for which they are qualifying. Others will come to Copenhagen to study. Dr Wissum will audition them and train the new members until they are ready to perform. It demands hard work and sacrifice of other interests.

Dr Wissum said that professional status for MIK is out of the question, not only because of its changing composition but, more important, the members realize that the future of Greenland depends upon them. These young people would like to travel and see foreign countries, just as they like to break into the twist or rock-and-roll, but their major interest is the education and training for which they are temporarily in Denmark. MIK is merely fun in their leisure time, a joy shared as they pass on the Eskimo folklore which so enriches the heritage of all Greenlanders today. ♦

BASKET MAKERS OF MOUNT CURRIE



Photographs and story by Renate Wilson



Coiled baskets, imbricated with cherry bark, made recently at Mount Currie and, above, a classic Salish berry basket 14" high dating from about 1900 now in the collection of the Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia.

THE MOUNT CURRIE INDIAN RESERVE is famous for the efficiency of its berry pickers, the quality of horses bred there, and most particularly, the cedar-root baskets made by the women.

These baskets are fashioned entirely from materials found in the surrounding country: cedar roots, cedar wood, wild straw, the bark from wild cherry trees, and deer hide. Those who think that Indian crafts are disappearing or have been reduced to tourist souvenirs might well visit this village. Far from dying out, basket making is flourishing there and definitely not only for the tourist trade. There cannot be many Salish babies who do not spend their first few months in basket cradles or berry pickers who use anything but their own baskets.

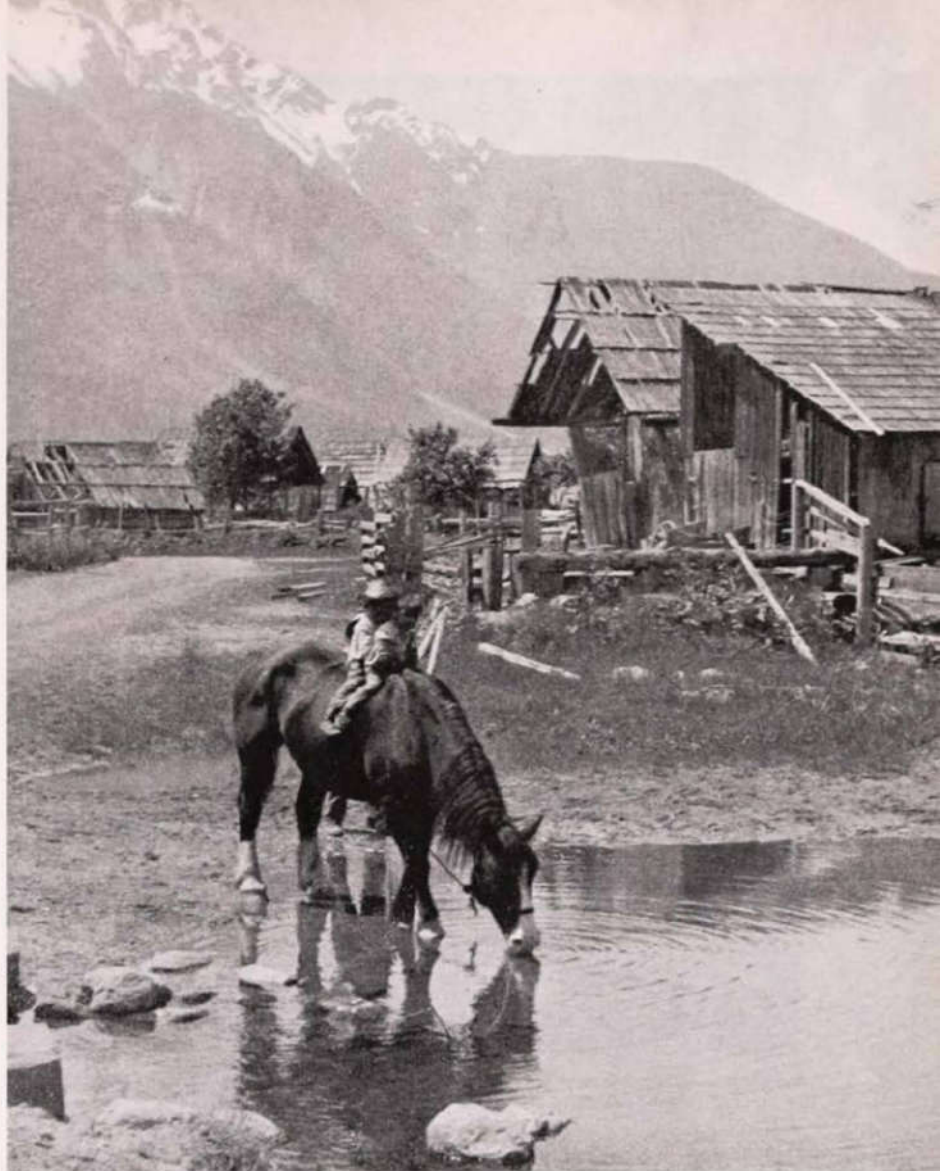
The Lillooet Indians of whom the Mount Currie band is a part, belong to the larger group or nation of Interior Salish. Their reserve, until recently known as Creekside, lies in the heart of the Pemberton Valley, 100 miles north of Vancouver. It is a blessed stretch of country, a fertile valley flanked by the Lillooet and the Birkenhead rivers and guarded by lofty, snowcapped mountains. In the fall the salmon come up the rivers in their millions to spawn. For the trapper and hunter there are marten, mink, muskrat, beaver, bear, deer and mountain goat in good supply. Once part of a lake-and-portage route to the interior of British Columbia, the valley lost its importance when the road through the Fraser Canyon was completed. Now it is a quiet place, served by the daily train of the Pacific Great Eastern Railway. Hard-

ly anybody except the members of this 700-strong band get off at the tiny station of Mount Currie although a few non-Indians such as the Oblate Father, the teaching Sisters, and one or two merchants also make it their home.

During the summer the women keep busy with the cultivation of sizable vegetable gardens and picking berries in the surrounding hills as well as the commercial berry fields on both sides of the Canada-United States border. In the long winter months

they make baskets. But long before they can actually sit down to start on a single one, they must collect all the necessary materials — a laborious, time-consuming business which takes them over considerable distances.

"When it's a nice calm day without wind I go out to dig my cedar roots" explains Mrs Rosie Ross, a cheerful, rotund grandmother of 61. "I walk for a long time to find a tree, must be just right size. Then I look along the ground to see where the roots grow. Three, four feet from tree maybe, I





"Everything I need for my baskets I find all around me" says Mrs Rosie Ross. "A nice young cedar is sure to have plenty nice roots . . ."

"I dig down and I pull, and I dig again, and pull again . . ."

"Yes, here they are."



start digging. Then I pull, and dig some more and pull some more, a long long piece of root, about thick as my finger. I dig it out as far as it will go and chop it off with my little axe. I need lots of roots."

Dressed in well-patched, faded jeans, a kerchief round her head, Mrs Ross took me to her favourite places in the woods surrounding the reserve. She dug vigorously in spite of the heat, mosquitoes, and her own circumference, and knew exactly how far away from any given tree she must go to come upon just the right thickness of roots.

"I dry them out a few days" she said, "I scrape the dirt and the outside layer off and then I split them, carefully, carefully, to make long thin strips. They must all be the same thickness and width so the baskets will look neat and even. I make a big bundle and put it away in a safe place."

Meanwhile Rosie's husband had felled a young cedar and chopped it into manageable chunks from which Rosie sliced thin, narrow splints for the "bones" of the baskets. The next step was to locate a good patch of "wild straw" which she gathered in armfuls. This was cut into even lengths and boiled in a big pot over an outdoor fire till the green stalks became creamy white. They too were carefully tied in bundles and set aside.

Then we went to find one of Rosie's treasures, a rusty old bucket she had buried in a well hidden spot. "This is my cherry bark" she told me, as she dug the bucket out of the swampy ground. "A year ago I went way, way up the mountainside where the wild cherry trees grow. I took off some of the bark and put it into this bucket, must be rusty, very rusty. I smoothed it out so it's without wrinkles and I put lots of wet earth on top and then I buried it deep."



"When I have dried the roots I split them carefully till I have enough to make a big bundle."



Mrs Martin Williams has a bundle of split roots on her lap and holds more unsplit cedar roots.

Cherry bark is an indifferent brownish colour to begin with, but the longer it is buried in its wet, rusty prison, the darker will it become. Rosie showed me some bark that had only been in the bucket a few months; it was a pale golden brown, while the pieces that had been left for a year were a rich, deep colour. She washed the bark in a nearby creek and folded and tied it just like a piece of cloth.

The last ingredient for the baskets are strips of deer hide for handles, hinges, or straps. Some of the women are expert at tanning the hide to a smooth softness. It seems there is quite a bit of trading involved. "I

like to go out for roots and bark," said Rosie, "and I have a friend who makes beautiful deer hide, so I give her bark and she gives me hide."

When everything has been assembled, the actual basket making can begin. Rosie Ross very generously took the time and trouble to explain each step. While she talked she worked with the swiftness and sureness of long practice. "I start making baskets when I first married, at 21, and I think maybe I have made about a thousand baskets since."

First she cut a number of cedar splints into the right length for the basket base. From the basin of water

which was always at her side, she took one of the long strands of split cedar root (the water keeps this pliant) and coiled it around the splint, then fastened the covered splints together with a special weave. To guide the root in and out she used a sharp instrument rather like an awl. When the base was finished, she chose an especially long splint which had been well soaked and joined it at right angles to the base all the way around. Constantly dipping roots and splints into the water, Rosie continued to build up the sides, covering the splints with neat coils and joining them together at the same time.



"A patch of wild straw. I cut it and boil it till it is white, and then I make little bundles and keep it clean somewhere till I need it."

"A big deer hide, makes lots and lots of handles, straps and hinges for baskets with lids."

"The wild cherry bark must stay in a rusty pot for a long time, maybe a year. I cover it with wet earth, keep it wet, and hide it in a secret place, only I know where. When I dig it out it is nice and brown, dark brown when it has been hidden for a long time, not so dark when I am in a hurry."



From the second row on she began to make the decorative pattern. After wetting narrow strips of cherry bark she scraped them with the blunt side of a little knife till they became shiny and smooth and then wove them into the basket on top of the cedar root. Alternately using darker and lighter coloured pieces of cherry bark and the almost white wild straw, she created her pattern. The combination of these soft shades gives the baskets a lively, colourful appearance without being in any way garish or cheap looking. The women finish their baskets so securely that no loose ends show and neither rough handling nor long use set them adrift. Some of the baskets still in daily use are very old indeed,

the pattern nearly obscured by the grime of years but the construction still sound.

The combination of cedar wood and coiled roots is so sturdy that the baskets are also nearly waterproof. This is particularly necessary for the berry baskets. "I make a paste of sugar, flour and water and smear the inside of the berry basket with this when I first start using it", Rosie Ross explained, "then all the little cracks will be closed up and the berry juice will not run away. We can even cook in baskets. I have never done this, but I remember my grandmother, long time ago. She used very tightly woven baskets. She put in meat and vegetables. Then she heated a stone in the

fire and when it was very hot she poured water on it so it steamed and then threw it into the cooking basket. After it became cold she put in another and maybe more till all the food was cooked."

Rosie also explained the patterns on the baskets to me. They are somewhat stylized but with a little care one can easily understand them. There is the zig-zag of lightning, the track of a grouse, a cluster of flies, the distinctive shape of flying geese and Rosie's own favourite, the cheerful sunburst. Little figures of people and animals which look rather like the embroidery on a child's sampler are also used. A comparison of contemporary baskets with museum pieces clearly shows the





continuation of traditional patterns over the years.

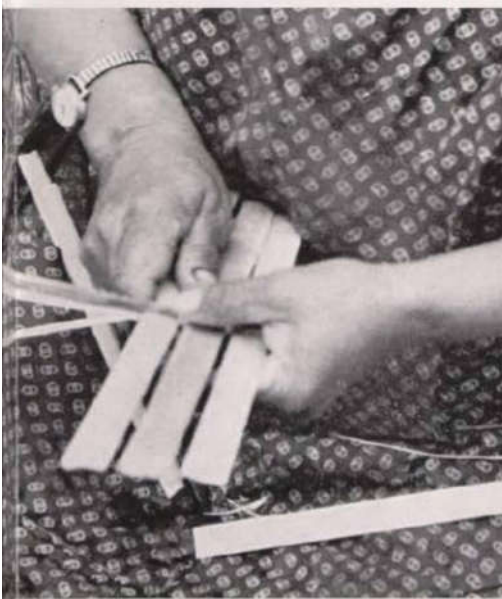
Baskets with lids are given neat deer hide hinges. Others have hide handles. The cradles come with curved wooden hoops as well as carrying straps and a harness to tie the baby in securely. The doll cradles are exact replicas of the real thing and sure to delight any little girl's heart.

To watch the women at work is a pleasure. There is a sense of history about it — their mothers, grandmothers and so back beyond memory have used exactly the same materials, and probably found them in much the same locations. Each movement of the hands, each twist of the bark or root has been handed down. And yet the women have also moved with the times. While the shapes of some of the baskets, such as the squarish berry baskets and the oblong cradles, are traditional, others are modern adaptations. I saw large work baskets, small ones for trinkets and gloves, fish creels, and trays of many sizes and shapes. Much of this basket work is solid throughout but there is also an open weave. This is done by coiling the long cedar root strips round



"Now I start. First, for the bottom, I weave together cedar splints with my bark. I have to soak both well in water to make them soft."

A small awl helps in threading the bark in and out. When the base is finished the sides are built up. A very long cedar splint is used for this.





Mrs Nellie Dan, daughter of Rosie Ross, is one of the younger women who make baskets and she is teaching her daughter the art. Here she is finishing a very elaborate open-work shopping basket. Mrs Joseph Jim (below) who is well over eighty, finishes a berry basket.



another set of split roots and bending them into loops which are fastened to the edge of the previous loop at regular intervals. Some of the fancier shopping baskets are made this way and very attractive they are too.

So skilled are the women that they continue to make baskets to a very old age. Some of the most beautiful ones are made by Mrs Joseph Jim who is well over 80 and almost blind.

Mrs Rosie Ross loves making baskets. She told me this over and over during the days in which I followed her about. Of course she was not able to just sit down and show me how it was done without interruption; she had to take care of all the other things that needed attention. We spent some hours in her very large vegetable garden harvesting corn, beets, cucumbers and carrots. She fed the chickens and collected eggs, gave the pig its dinner, cooked meals for her husband and assorted relatives who came and went. There was the washing and mending she does for the Oblate Father and various other bachelors and a quantity of fruit had to be canned before it spoilt.

In between these activities which Rosie accomplished with speed and unfailing good humour she took me into the bush for roots, dug up her rusty bucket, cut some wild straw and





The baskets made at Mount Currie are in constant use. Rosie Ross uses her well-worn berry basket to bring in a load of corn. The baby is snug and secure in her basket cradle decorated with little animals. A small replica is just the thing to make a little girl with a doll happy.

gave me a detailed demonstration of basket making.

Pausing in my note-taking and photographing I was reminded of the words in which James Teit, of the famous Jesup North Pacific Expedition, described the Lillooet Indians. He called them "lovers of peace, intelligent, receptive, quiet, honest, hospitable and industrious". That was written in 1900. After a couple of days of living in Rosie Ross's pocket in 1963 I was happy to come to the same conclusion. ♦



Exploring with Sousi and Black Basile

BY GUY BLANCHET

After making his survey for the Canadian government in 1921-3 of Great Slave Lake, the eastern end of which until his time had only been charted by Captain George Back, Mr Blanchet headed farther into the Northwest Territories and established the source of the Coppermine River which had not previously been known. The photographs are by the author, with some by J. W. Tyrrell.

ON THE COMPLETION of the survey of Great Slave Lake in 1923, I planned to make an exploration north of East Arm of the lake into the little-known plateau, the subarctic Barren Grounds, to map the headwaters of rivers draining from it north to the Arctic, the Coppermine River and Back's Great Fish River, now Back River.

Travel would be by canoe and for that the season is short, from the middle of July to early September. For this, I required two natives, familiar with the country and how to live there and good canoemen.

At Fort Resolution, I discussed the expedition with Pierre Mercredi, the Hudson's Bay Company manager. He told me that the young men did not know the country and for them summer was a time to loaf at the Fort, not work. I should have to get old men who had hunted muskoxen in their youth.

I discussed the expedition with Sousi Beaulieu who had been my pilot on the lake survey. I had thought that he was too old but he still retained the spirit of the father of his grandfather, a Frenchman of the fur brigade. He said: "Me I would like to see the Barren Grounds again before I die and fill my belly with the meat of caribou." Through Sousi, an old Yellowknife Indian, Black Basile, was persuaded, reluctantly, to join us.

The background of these two old men was essentially different. At a pause at Fort Chipewyan by the brigade, the Frenchman had started Sousi's family. His son,

Sousi's grandfather, had accompanied Alexander Mackenzie to the Pacific and had assisted Franklin on his first Arctic Expedition by the Yellowknife River. His father, King Beaulieu was Warburton Pike's guide on his muskox hunt in the Barren Grounds. The blood of the Frenchman of the brigade had run thin through successive Indian mothers but it had preserved strong qualities of leadership, ambition, and a certain truculence—a strange, mixed inheritance.

Black Basile was an insignificant member of the Indians encamped about the Fort. His people, the Yellowknives, had dominated the caribou passes of the Barren Grounds in the time of Samuel Hearne and Franklin but had been crushingly defeated by the Dog-ribs and the survivors had lost their spirit. Basile had inherited the demoralization of a defeated people. Sousi gave me a thumb-nail sketch of Basile. "He is only an Indian but in his young days he travelled the Barren Grounds and he may remember. He can paddle because he has never had an engine and he is used to carrying loads." He added, "Basile has often starved."

With Sousi and Basile, I set out on the 250 mile journey to the east end of Great Slave Lake. To the west of Fort Resolution was the travelled route to the Mackenzie but the East Arm had been little known before the survey and it had the interest of strange, remote places, steeped in the lore and traditions of the past. As it cut deeply into the plateau, islands great and small



confused its waterways, cliffs rose steeply from the lake for seven hundred feet with varicoloured strata and with moss-covered ledges adding to their picturesqueness.

Sousi dominated Basile and although he accepted my authority in important matters, he lost the distant respectfulness given the white man at the Fort. When travelling with several natives, even when they know English, they carry on their conversation in their own tongue, in this case Chipewyan, of which I knew little. Moreover, the silent Indian is loquacious.

Occasionally, Sousi would vouchsafe information, as when we were making the wide traverse to Iles du Goulet. A fleet of Indian canoes was crossing from the north shore by Ile du Large. A heavy sea was running. Sousi recalled passages he had made and said that sometimes a storm overtook them. If the canoes were heavy laden, first the women were thrown overboard, then the dogs. Sometimes even the men were drowned.

As an interpreter, he was not helpful. I told him to ask Basile if the country became flatter after we climbed 'the mountain'. There was much talk and no answer. Finally I asked, "What did Basile say?" Sousi replied, "Basile say nothing, just laugh." He had said a great deal and had not laughed, he never did.

We reached the east end of the lake and camped on the park-like bench where Captain Back had built his winter quarters in 1833, Fort Reliance. A large river, the Lockhart enters the lake there after plunging down the



The old fireplace and chimneys of Fort Reliance, the post set up by Captain Back in 1833. Buffalo Jones in 1897 built a cabin about one of the chimneys. J.W.T. 1900

Left: Sousi Beaulieu.

rocky slope from the plateau. A short investigation proved that it was unnavigable. We followed past a succession of cascades to a great fall in a deep canyon. I descended to a point of rock swept by spray to get photographs. Sousi followed at a safe distance and kept warning me to be careful, "the rock a slippery." I was surprised at his thoughtfulness. This was explained later while we "boiled the kettle" when he said, "You know if anything happened to you, it would be bad for me." He told me that there was a caribou crossing above the falls and that many were carried over and drowned. His father had considered building a fence there.

When preparing for our expedition, I was laying out what I considered minimum supplies for a month. Sousi exclaimed: "What for we carry store food to country where meat abounds?" I agreed. At least we should experience life there as did the Indians in the old days. As with them, it might be feasting or there might be times of famine.

Indians have a portage route of little lakes bypassing the turbulent river to Artillery Lake. This has been used from the oldest time. It was followed by Warburton Pike in 1889 guided by his Indian companions. Since then it has been known by his name, Pike's Portage. We would follow this for 25 miles to Artillery Lake on the plateau.

Pike's Portage starts with a steep three and a half mile climb to the first lake. I had my instruments and gear, and the survey to make. Sousi carried a light pack decoratively with his Assomption sash. Basile carried the canoe. When we reached the first lake, we had to wait

The beginning of Pike's Portage. The tree in centre foreground beside up-turned canoes and tent is Tyrrell's lobsterstick. J.W.T. 1899



Blanchet's camp at the last woods, Artillery Lake. A few well developed trees grew in a sheltered spot.

Sousi by one of the dwarf trees that may be a thousand years old.



some time for Basile. When he arrived, his dark face was such a peculiar muddy colour that I laughed. After some discussion with Basile, Sousi said, "You shouldn't laugh, Basile say, 'maybe die'."

We completed the portage and arrived at the fine sheet of water, Artillery Lake, stretching to the horizon. Basile survived and deposited his canoe with the knowledge that for many miles the lake would carry his burden. While Sousi and I were preparing an uninteresting supper, Basile set out with the rifle. Presently he returned in great excitement with a handful of fresh caribou dung. Sousi, who had been telling me of times when all the people starved, now cried, "I tole you in my country I always find meat."

Sure enough, next morning while proceeding up the lake, caribou antlers appeared over a hill and we secured two. The feast was on. We were at the last woods and had plenty of fuel and decided to take a day to dry meat. Meal succeeded meal, roast meat, boiled meat, and internals best not described. At my last view of my companions that night, each had a caribou head which had been roasting *au naturel* by the fire and they were tearing at them like wolves. Next morning they were not so happy. Sousi had an attack of "the misery" and Basile claimed to have a strained back from carrying the canoe.

When we set out up the lake, we took on what kindling the canoe would carry as well as dry and fresh meat

enough for some days. The edge of the forest is marked by scattered wind-blown dwarfs which might be a thousand years old. Beyond the trees we would have to depend on what willow twigs we could find along the shore and on occasions when there were none we used a heavy black moss that grows on sandy hillsides. Lacking both, meat could be scorched on a pile of heather that burns with a short fierce flame. With moss, cooking was done in a tightly lidded kettle. When twigs were available, stones were set in the direction of the wind, close together and a tiny fire kindled at the windward end. When the kettle boiled everything was considered cooked. Meals were unconventional and came at no stated times. A fresh kill, the sight of willow twigs, or just the thought of eating was sufficient reason. Sousi's explanation when I complained of too many stops was, "Why should we not feast when we have abundance? Who knows when we may be starving?"

Both my companions had accepted the teaching of the Mission, Sousi even wore a medal of the Virgin, but they had not forgotten the old superstitions which they still believed. Some were little better than fairy tales.

On Artillery Lake there are two dome-shaped hills, one on either side of the lake. Sousi told me the old legend. The one on the west side was the home of a giant beaver who owned the lake, the other was occupied by a huge muskrat, his slave. They even had a tunnel leading



"A sprawling body of water with deep bays, points, and islands." J.W.S.



Sparse vegetation in a boulder-strewn valley.

to Great Slave Lake. "It is well to pay the lake to please the beaver," so I dropped some tobacco overboard. Sousi who was seldom satisfied said that this was not much and that the beaver might be angry.

He was. Not long afterwards, while making a wide traverse, a sudden squall raised waves that threatened our canoe. Sousi, who was inclined to rest on his paddle while talking to Basile, put real strength into it as we headed for shelter. As we approached land, he exclaimed, "Thank you, thank you, thank you." He did not explain whom he was thanking. It probably was the beaver. Legend of monsters 'owning the lake' are frequently encountered in the northern Indian country.

Basile's world was full of spirits, mostly evil and he had a dread of meeting Eskimos. When questioned whether he had ever seen an Eskimo, he replied, "Once. They were big and far away . . . they might have been caribou." Still the fear haunted him.

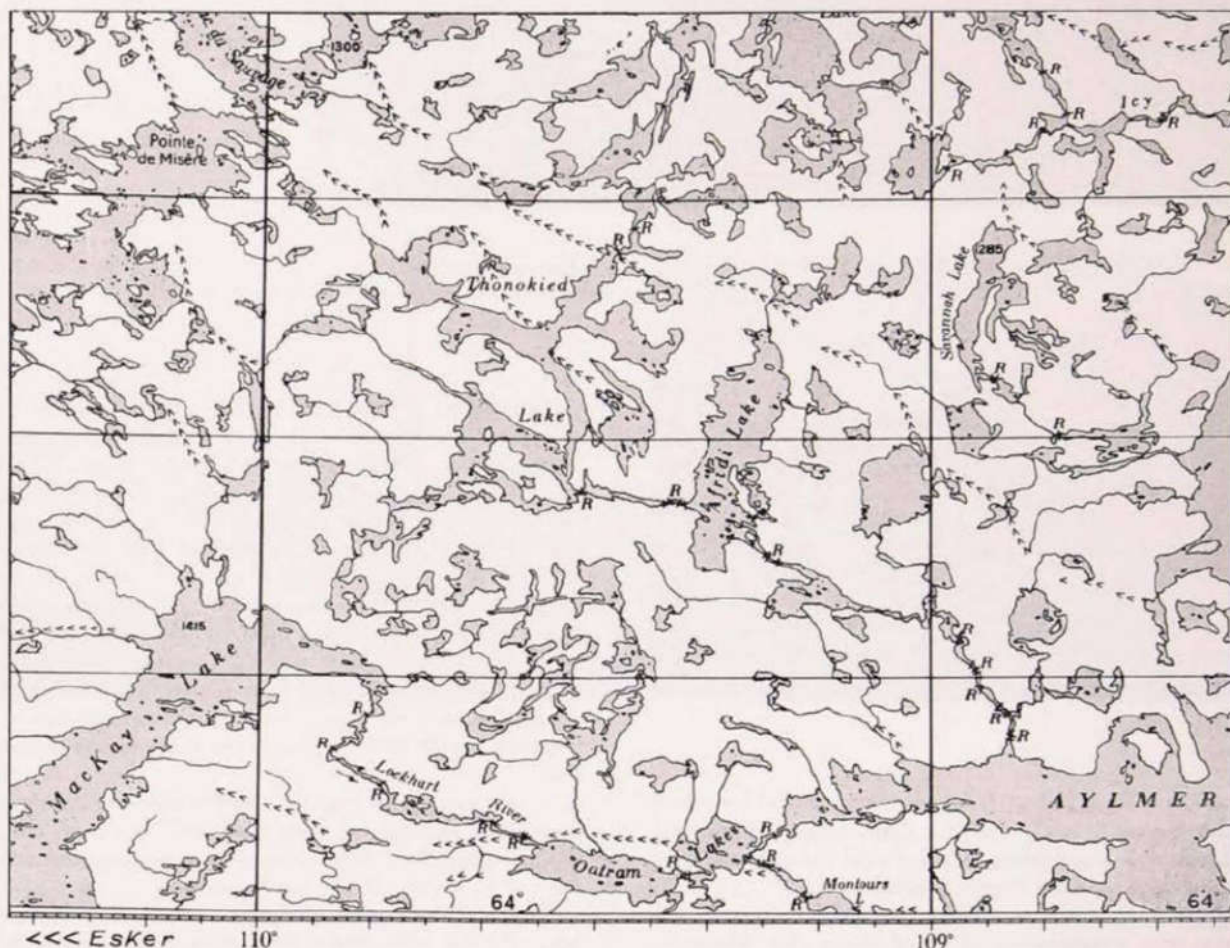
There is a narrow passage from Artillery Lake to Clinton-Colden Lake which is known as the "Place where the Caribou swim among the Ice". This had been a famous caribou pass and they showed me stone ambushes from which the hunters made their slaughter while women and children drove the caribou into the pass. They would also build fences consisting of clumps of moss set on boulders which channelled to their destruction the short-sighted animals that took them for people.

Clinton-Colden Lake is a great sprawling body of water with a confusion of deep bays, points and islands. Sousi depended on Basile's guidance here. Basile asked that we land on a high island from which he could study the country. From its summit he could see the blue ridge which marks the Arctic divide. He said, "When I was so young that it was before I had my first canoe and no wife, I travelled with the women along those hills to the Strait of Thanakoia where we met the men who had travelled by canoe, hunting." He pointed in a north-westerly direction. Indians have a remarkable sense of orientation and, no matter how circuitous their travel, they can usually point to their objective without hesitation.

In this case Basile was right. By following his course we reached the Strait of Thanakoia with its conical sand hill. This had been a famous caribou crossing and was marked by deep trails of the migration.

We usually secured a caribou as we required one for we could not carry much meat in our little canoe. At times I had difficulty in restraining my companions from killing wantonly. Once I found Basile with a freshly killed young buck. We had all the meat we could carry. His explanation introduced me to a new delicacy, the velvet of the antler tips. Roasted it has a flavour of nuts and they assured me that it was "strong food". The natives preferred hard meat and often left the choice steaks and roast. They particularly loved the raw marrow. Sousi usually secured this, saying that from the oldest time he liked to suck the marrow bones. Basile regarded him resentfully for he too liked the raw marrow. Once when he had a chance to talk to me privately he confided, "No good that Sousi, no good paddle, too much belly," but he never asserted himself against Sousi.

This was the season of the white nights and also of the fly pest. There was some relief travelling at night, camping in the heat of the day. Our little 7 by 7 tent was protected by netting. There was room for the three of us but Basile would not join us. I asked Sousi why? He said: "Basile he ashamed to sleep with a white man." This may have gone back to when a sharp line was



This section of a topographical survey map shows part of the confused country, then unmapped, that Blanchet was exploring. The lake at the upper left is the eastern end of Lac de Gras.

drawn between the white masters and the Indians. The taboo was still so strong that Basile endured rain and flies buried in his blanket as his people had before him.

Flies are the curse of the summer season in the north as they hound any blooded animal. Man can get some relief behind netting or from a smudge or, as caribou do, by travelling up wind. They drive the caribou frantic and account for much of their summer wandering. Caribou will plunge into a lake to rid themselves of their pests.

The plateau has interest in its details, its rivers and innumerable lakes. But in its broad horizon it is monotonous. Few conspicuous hills rise above its general elevation of fifteen hundred feet. Its valleys are wide and its depressions are usually shallow irregular lakes. Only the roots of its ancient mountains remain and over all is the glacial debris, sand, gravel, and innumerable boulders.

Well watered valleys produce a fair cover of ground vegetation but the higher slopes are lightly covered with moss, lichen, and hardy shrubs. There is a sweep of green in early summer, and a multi-coloured carpet in autumn of purple, gold, and brown tinted by the early frosts.

Leaving Thanakoia, we crossed Aylmer Lake, following its south shore into the unmapped west bay. There is a large river discharging into it which was named Outram River when Stewart and Anderson of the Hudson's Bay Company travelled it on their Franklin search. Their sketch map and description offered little assistance. Sousi had more information. It took its rise in a great lake to the southwest, The Lake of the Big Canoe, named by his father (now Lake MacKay). We were in the country of the muskox hunters. "Always we travelled in winter with dogs and returned in spring. From the

oldest time, no one travelled northward by canoe."

This country to the north was my chief interest, with its unknown sources of rivers. I set out to investigate, following a small stream, past a succession of lakes. To the north there appeared to be a break in the blue range of the divide. There seemed to be waterways for our canoe. The sight of a family of wolves with well-grown youngsters promised caribou. Those seen during the early season were probably bachelors. Mating couples were fully occupied raising their families on the small life of the country at their sand-hill homes. Now they were hunting caribou.

Sousi knew this country from former muskox hunts but these had been made in winter with dogs, not canoes. He agreed that it might be possible and was willing to try to find a canoe route. Basile was unhappy at the prospect; to the west was the country of his enemies the Dogribs, to the north were the terrible Eskimos. He searched the old camp sites, rings of tent stones, the midden heaps. He found interesting relics of the past, spear and arrow heads, quarries where these were made.

Black Basile and Sousi preparing a meal. Sousi brings in a few willow twigs, Basile holds our dinner.



Once he showed me a piece of fur he did not know. I explained that it was sealskin, an animal of the northern sea. To him that meant Eskimo and his fears were redoubled.

On Aylmer Lake we had been held up two days on a desolate island while a field of old ice with fog drifted



Indian campsite by a lonely lake.

G.B.—PUBLIC ARCHIVES

past, the last of the past winter. Already birds were gathering for the migration. On our northern journey, lake and portage brought us to a large body of water. Sousi assured me that this was not his father's Lac de Gras. We searched its shore line for two days before we found the outlet, discharging east towards Back's Great Fish River. This must be its chief source which he named Icy river where it enters Muskox Lake.

From its location, I identified this lake as probably Hearne's Thonokied Lake which he passed on his return journey from the mouth of the Coppermine and I gave it this name.

Here we encountered our first storm from the Arctic with sleet, rain and a violent wind that broke our tent pole, the only one for fifty miles. We improvised one from a spare paddle and when the storm abated after three days we dried what we could. We had got plenty of meat but practically no fuel. Actually raw meat is more nutritious than burnt meat. I told Sousi a story I had read about the start of cooking. "The people were gathered around the fire eating meat of a fresh kill. A woman accidentally dropped her meat into the fire.



Sousi, cap set over tumpline, brings caribou meat to camp.



Solitary trees at Muskox Rapids. Sousi told me not to cut them; they had been there a long time and the people just used dead branches.

When she recovered it, it was cooked and she liked this so much that people started to burn their meat." Sousi did not approve of the story. He said, "It must have been a white woman. No Indian did that." He seldom liked my stories while I was always interested in his.

The storm dampened the spirits of my companions and they might have refused to continue except that the storm had started the caribou migration southward. They appeared suddenly, pouring over the northern hills, mostly cows and young. They swept past us like a tide, paying little attention to us, merely parting to pass the tent. We had to drive away young ones who were too curious.

They were travelling westward, following a sand esker. This suggested a large lake which they were avoiding. I followed the esker for ten miles where I saw a lake stretching to a water horizon. A chain of small lakes along the esker offered a fair portage route. The caribou

and the big lake revived Sousi's interest. Basile was not happy at the prospect.

I decided to follow the south shore of the big lake to make certain that the discharge was west not south. This gave us added distance searching bays. One after another ended at the hills which closed the south. There were no caribou south of the lake while hundreds were passing to the north. The lake was too stormy to cross and after the wolves had cleaned up our meat cache our supplies were low. For the three days of our passage down the lake, we had a 'starving time' except for two fish.

Hills closed in the west end of the lake but when we reached them we heard the sound of heavy water. There was the river, heading northwest. Franklin's upstream farthest was only forty miles away on this course. Unquestionably this was the headwaters of the Coppermine. A point of interest was added in connection with Hearne's return journey from the mouth of Coppermine River.



One of Tyrrell's camps in the thinning forest at timber-line where spruce and the odd tamarack alone survive.

J.W.T. c. 1900

Below: Dwarf trees, ancient and contorted.

He notes passing "the Lake of the White Stone." On our journey down the lake we had passed a massive fragment of white quartzite on the shore—just such a feature as would appeal to Indians in naming a lake. Now it is called Lac de Gras, the name given by Sousi's father to Warburton Pike when he was there in 1889.

Our camp at the discharge from the lake belied the name Barren Grounds. It was on a grassy flat with large willows. This was the caribou crossing and they kept passing like a herd of cattle. Ptarmigan burred and the pool below the rapid was alive with trout. But summer was over, the recent storm had given its warning. Not even a cheep that replaced the nesting song of the birds was heard. They had departed and now that our purpose had been accomplished it was time for us to return.

This was through familiar country, by water that we knew. Our worst trouble was stormy weather but when possible we travelled long hours and made fast time.

Late one evening, although darkness had settled, we were making every effort to reach the woods on Artillery Lake. Basile's sharp eyes caught a glimpse of a clump of dwarf trees against the sky line. Soon we had a fire with leaping red flames, so different from the feeble yellow of willow twigs or the black smoke of moss.

Sousi crouched over it, absorbing much of its heat. "To me," he said, "a fire is like a father. I was glad to see the Barren Grounds again and the caribou. Strong meat brought back my young days, but never again will I leave the trees." Life for him at the Fort would have compensations. He would have new stories to tell of his



journey across the old forgotten hunting grounds of his people where the tent stones of the encampments were almost buried in moss.

Basile said little. He was relieved of his fears, for the spirits of the Barren Grounds do not enter the woodlands and he would have the protection of the Mission. He would not be a returning hero. His lodge would be again on the outskirts of the encampment. If he was noticed, one might say, "I see poor old Black Basile has returned from some trip that he has made".

For myself, there was the satisfaction of a difficult exploration accomplished. The Barren Grounds held much of interest and were enlivened by the caribou. But I looked forward to having our diet of straight meat varied with prunes and porridge, bannock and beans, and to returning home.

the ordeal of WILLIAM MACTAVISH

by Fred E. Bartlett



TO SAY THAT William Mactavish did not care for his job as Governor of Assiniboia would have been putting it mildly. In 1858, on learning of his appointment, he wrote the London office of the Hudson's Bay Company: "I would have preferred had my Employers seen fit to appoint another to the office." Alluding to his job eleven years later he said he would "rather be a stoker in hell." During the intervening years he filled his mail to London with threats of resigning, pleas that he be relieved, and suggestions that various other people be named governor in his stead. His attitude was understandable, for it was a job that brought him little but grief.

Not only that, it brought him little historical recognition. The Red River insurrection gave many names to Canadian history—Louis Riel, Thomas Scott, and John Christian Schultz, to name a few. All of these are well known in Canadian history, and all are much discussed. Mactavish, however, fared differently. As the Hudson's Bay Company's Governor of Assiniboia and of Rupert's Land, he was Red River settlement's chief public official and the presiding officer of the Council of Assiniboia. In theory, though not in practice, his power was nearly absolute. And he might have been the only man in the settlement who could have derailed the insurrection once it had broken out. But in spite of his pre-eminent position Mactavish, when mentioned at all in connection with the disturbances, is usually mentioned briefly, uncertainly, and only in passing.

During postgraduate research at the University of Manitoba Mr Bartlett made a study of Governor Mactavish, amplified by reference to H B C archives for which gratitude is expressed to the Governor and Committee.

The reason is fairly obvious. Of William Mactavish little is known. Contemporary description of him is scattered and superficial, and details of his life are scarce. And if he wanted to be remembered he did not co-operate properly. Historical importance is sometimes determined by the amount of material an individual leaves historians to work with, and Mactavish left little. He kept no known journals or diaries, and personal correspondence during his later more important years is sparse. Partly as a result, his life has inspired no biographer, nor even article writer.

Another reason for his being generally ignored is that his influence on events in Red River in the 1860s and during the rebellion is difficult to assess. What influence he did exert was largely of a negative variety. His personality and attitude prevented his making more of a mark during the decade preceding the uprising, and severe illness stood in his way during the rebellion itself. But whether he influenced it or not, his story has a rightful place in the rebellion's history. Historical events are important primarily not as parts of great movements or expressions of abstract ideals, but as tales of human fortunes. For Mactavish the rebellion was a providential injustice and a crime against human dignity. His story, the execution of Thomas Scott notwithstanding, is the closest thing to genuine tragedy to come out of the somewhat farcical affair, and it is one that deserves to be told.

Mactavish's career with the Hudson's Bay Company had been a long one. He had entered the Company's

service in Scotland and had arrived in Rupert's Land in 1833 at the age of eighteen. Most of his next twenty-four years he spent at York Factory, on the shores of Hudson Bay. His rise had been regular; he was promoted to Chief Trader in 1846, and to Chief Factor in 1852. And in 1857 he was appointed officer in charge of Fort Garry, then becoming the most important post in Rupert's Land.

The turning point in his life came the following year when, on the resignation of Francis Godschall Johnson, Mactavish was appointed Governor of Assiniboia, the chief civil officer of the Red River settlement. Almost at the same time Presbyterian Mactavish sank his roots even deeper into Red River's clay soil by marrying Mary Sarah McDermot, Catholic, one fourth Indian, and the daughter of Andrew McDermot, one of the settlement's longest residents and wealthiest men. Up to this point Mactavish had been little more than a modified business man, handling with dexterity the various duties of a responsible chief factor in the Company's sprawling fur trade empire. On becoming Governor of Assiniboia, however, he was thrust into a semi-political arena, a change that would sour his life and result in a personal disaster.

Being Governor of Assiniboia had never been easy. In 1816, for instance, during the period of conflict between the Hudson's Bay and the North West Companies, Governor Robert Semple had been killed. The penalties of the job had been less drastic since then, being more trying than fatal, but seldom were its duties pleasant to perform. And until 1849, when the Company virtually conceded that battle to the enemy, trouble had repeatedly cropped up over the Company's efforts to enforce its trade monopoly through the Government of Assiniboia.

Throughout, the Company's government had depended for its effectiveness on popular support. It never got active popular support, but it did get the next best thing, popular apathy. The English speaking halfbreeds and Scottish settlers making up half the population displayed a passive abhorrence for politics. The French speaking halfbreeds composing the other half, after gaining their goal of free trade in 1849, came more and more to identify their interests with the Company's government. But the Company was chary of availing itself of this support for fear of starting trouble between the two halfbreed communities, the Catholic French and the Protestant English speaking. Such a stalemate was good enough for a good many years. Not being under attack, the Government of Assiniboia needed little or no active support.

It was a balance easily tipped, however, and a trickle of newcomers into Red River from Canada to the east

managed to upset it. By 1858 these Canadians, agitating for annexation of the settlement to Canada, were launching Red River on a new phase in its history. They concentrated on direct attacks against the Company's government, and unfortunately it was a government wide open for criticism. Though the Councillors of Assiniboia were chosen generally by popular consent, the process was appointive, not democratic, a fact newly arriving Canadians were quick to notice. The newcomers looked on even a paternal oligarchy such as the Government of Assiniboia with the strident political intolerance common to members of young democracies. Coupled with this repugnance to autocracy was an urge to extend their country's frontiers to include their new residence. The result was political agitation in the settlement in the 1860s that brought repeated acts of lawlessness, deep animosities, and, because of its lack of either popular or military support, the near prostration of the Government of Assiniboia.

It was a political atmosphere entirely unsuited to the talents of William Mactavish. Under local attack from the small but noisy Canadian party from 1859 on, Mactavish needed either military support from the Imperial Government or popular support from the settlers. Efforts throughout the 1860s to get troops from England to support the government and protect the settlement from Indians were unsuccessful, however. And popular support was beyond Mactavish's ability or inclination to mobilize. Because of the latter it was Mactavish's personal qualities as much as any other factor that decided the settlement's course during the decade, and in a sense it was these personal qualities that led inadvertently to the Red River insurrection.

Taken in the abstract, there are perhaps too few men like Mactavish. Tall and spare, with sandy hair and beard, he was intelligent, understanding, and eminently honest. What descriptions of him there are stress his integrity, and it was an integrity both of deed and expression. Essentially a quiet man, he was not only candid and lively in expression but given at times to emotional outbursts that clearly stated his feelings on matters.

And, while intelligent, he was also intellectually detached. He never gave the Company that full measure of dedication that Sir George Simpson gave it, and with which Sir George built the fur trade into that efficient commercial empire it came to be. Neither did Mactavish possess that dedication to business and administration as an end in itself of Alexander Grant Dallas, the Governor of Rupert's Land preceding him. (Mactavish in 1862 had added to his duties as Governor of Assiniboia those

of Governor of Rupert's Land.) He worked hard and responsibly for the Company and the settlement. But if his dedication to both were traced to their sources there would have been found there a final reserve, a lack of intellectual and emotional commitment.

Mactavish probably committed himself more to his avocations than to anything else, in fact. Early devoting his spare time to hunting, fishing, and horseback riding, his later years found him preoccupied with studies of local flora, fauna, geographic features, and the like. All this, he said kept him "from rusting down into an oyster".

In some ways Mactavish's personality made him an excellent governor for Red River. He dealt impartially with both major elements of the population, and lack of political support failed to arouse in him any deep animosity or despair. At the same time, however, his lack of emotional commitment led to his failing to try to rise above his normal abilities and inclinations to give the people of Red River what they needed from him most—strong effective leadership. Without this leadership the settlement headed unchecked for the disturbances that ended the decade.

Admittedly, though, providing this leadership would have been a hard row for Mactavish to hoe. He was widely liked and respected, but was not particularly looked to by the settlement for political leadership. He had nothing of the dynamic, inspiring personality leadership requires. His advice on small matters was often sought and given, but even had he tried he probably would have been unable to supply that spark to men's minds that leads them out of themselves and into support of a cause unconnected with their own self-interest. Such sparks generally fly from ringing half-truths, oratory that would have been smothered by Mactavish's detachment and basic honesty. He was far too rational, too prone to see both sides of a conflict. He was a mediator, a conciliator, not a popular leader.

Since what Red River needed in the 1860s even more than it needed conciliation was dynamic, responsible leadership, Mactavish's administration was in spite of all his efforts a failure. Forced into political warfare by the Canadians, he fought only a weak, defensive battle and failed to gain the support of the English speaking settlers needed to keep the Canadians under control. He thereby gave the latter the free rein that led to their arousing in the French speaking halfbreeds—the Métis—the resentment and hatred of the Canadians and the coming Canadian rule that led directly to the uprising.

And fate decreed that what little ability to sway people Mactavish did have would be nullified by severe

illness just when he needed it most—at the start of the rebellion. Mactavish took to his bed with tuberculosis in August 1869 and seldom left it until his departure from the settlement in May 1870. The Métis set up their road blocks in mid-October 1869. The road blocks were to bar the entry of William McDougall, the Lieutenant-Governor-designate sent by Canada to assume control of the North-West Territory on its transfer from the Company to the Dominion on 1 December 1869. Had he not been ill, Mactavish would undoubtedly have visited the road blocks and endeavoured to disperse the Métis. And he would have tried to escort McDougall into the settlement personally. And in both efforts he would most likely have been successful. Mactavish's influence with the Métis was probably second only to that of Bishop Taché, the local Catholic prelate absent in Rome. Not only was Mactavish's wife a Catholic of mixed blood, though an English speaking one, but it was under Mactavish's rule that the Métis attained a measure of political equality in the settlement. Unfortunately, however, Mactavish was forced to rely on the Métis leaders themselves to convey his words to the men manning the road blocks, and those leaders distorted them almost beyond recognition.

Two weeks after setting up their blockade the Métis sent a force of some one hundred and twenty men to occupy Fort Garry. Mactavish had no inkling beforehand of the Métis plan to occupy the fort, but he would not have been able to do anything about it if he had. Members of the Canadian party asserted that he had been warned, but these are assertions unsupported by evidence and totally refuted by reliable testimony. To defend the fort Mactavish would have had to call for support from the English speaking settlers, who had no intention of opposing the Métis with force.

The capture of the fort was the beginning of a long, hard winter for Mactavish. Louis Riel, the glib, 25-year-old Métis leader inspiring the movement, soon set to work trying to give his "excessive executive ability" some semblance of legality. He talked the balky English speaking settlers into sending representatives to meet with French representatives to discuss forming a "provisional government". They were met by a proclamation from Mactavish entreating the Métis to desist from their insurrection. Riel managed to nullify its effect by distorting its sense, however, and the effort went for naught.

From then on it was just one thing after another. Virtually isolated in his bedroom in the Governor's residence at the north end of the fort, and occasionally under guard, Mactavish was forced to watch helplessly while Riel later in November deposed his government by

The Governor's House in Fort Garry a few years after the departure of William Mactavish. MANITOBA ARCHIVER



confiscating the books, records and funds of the Council of Assiniboia. At the same time he began what turned out to be an extended plundering of the Hudson's Bay Company's money and stores to support the Métis buffalo hunters and trip-men forming the body of his makeshift armed force.

William McDougall, posturing around Pembina while waiting to be let into the settlement, did not help matters at all. Seemingly intent on putting on a show of his own, he kept the air filled with insults, threats, accusations, excuses, proclamations, melodramatic intrigues, and calls to arms, all the while describing vividly to Ottawa his ludicrous attempts to maintain his dignity and his heroic efforts to protect himself from imaginary assailants. Pressed by a sense of urgency, by his supporters in the settlement, and by his tortured pride, McDougall decided to hurry things along. Instead of waiting for official word of the transfer of the territory he undertook to proclaim the transfer and remove Mactavish from office on his own nonexistent authority.

Unfortunately, his proclamations were even more spurious than he knew. When the Canadian Government heard of the trouble he was having they postponed the transfer. This would have left things in a confused state had his proclamations had any effect, but they did not. Riel, though unaware of their illegality, chose to ignore them. And since Riel had already disposed of the Government of Assiniboia and in effect removed Mactavish from office, McDougall's dethroning of Mactavish was merely redundant.

On December 7th, still unaware that McDougall's proclamations were unauthorized but knowing that the transfer to Canada was due to take place on December 1st, Riel proclaimed his "provisional government" as having been in operation since November 24th. The flag of the "provisional government" was hoisted on De-

cember 10th. Mactavish's brother-in-law, A. G. B. Bannatyne, helped him to get from his bedroom to a window where he could watch the event. A gentleman who visited Mactavish soon after said he

... never witnessed anything more pathetic than the way in which the Governor referred to the fact that the insurgents had hauled down the Union Jack and hoisted an ensign of their own devise with *fleur-de-lis* and shamrock, and how he said "As I saw, through my window, the hoisting of their rag on our old flag-staff, I almost choked with mortification and shame."

Thereafter, Mactavish was almost continually harassed by Riel. Visiting Mactavish in his bedroom at all hours of the day and night, Riel would demand "loans" from the Company and make threatening speeches when Mactavish turned him down. Each refusal only shortened the interval between visits, raised the level of the next demand, and intensified Riel's violent haranguing. Finally, by mid-January, most of the spirit had been sapped from the sick old man, and he did what he had long threatened to do—he sent in his letter of resignation, to take effect on 31 May 1870:

For some time past my health has been so broken, that I have had at times great difficulty in attending to my duties. Latterly it has failed me altogether and at this time I am so feeble as to be unfit for business of any kind, as I am still becoming weaker and weaker—I have no doubt that before spring I will be unfit for any exertion whatever, under these circumstances it would be useless to remain in your service and I have on retirement [*sic*] and that my connexion with the Company will cease with the close of the current outfit.

But his troubles with Riel were far from over. Another convention meeting in late January and early February failed to go entirely Riel's way, and one afternoon he stormed out of the hall, sought out Dr William Cowan,

the officer in charge of Fort Garry, rained abuse on him for several minutes, then threatened to have him shot within three hours unless he took an oath of allegiance to the "provisional government". Cowan refused and Riel gave him twenty minutes to think it over. Riel then went up to Mactavish's bedroom, repeated the abuse and the threat, demanded an oath of allegiance from Mactavish, and got another refusal. Enraged, Riel put Mactavish under close guard and threw Cowan into prison. When Bannatyne managed to sneak into Mactavish's residence the following day "he found Mrs Mactavish in a dreadful state at the condition of her husband". She declined to leave the fort and stay at her father's, however, in spite of her husband's virtual imprisonment.

Meanwhile, squabbling in the convention had continued, much of it over the position taken by the English settlers that the Council of Assiniboia with Mactavish at its head was still the settlement's legal government and they had no right to set up a provisional government. They insisted that Mactavish be consulted, and finally a delegation of two French and two English was sent to his bedroom. Mactavish, highly agitated, told them to form a government "for God's sake" and restore order. He refused, however, to delegate his authority. He recognized the practical need for some sort of working government, but refused to legalize the affair through any action of his own.

When the delegation returned and told Riel the result:

Riel asked whether Mr. Mactavish declared himself the Governor, and on being answered in the negative, remarked brutally, "it is well he did not, as out of this convention I would have formed a council of war, and we would have seen the consequences."

Many have interpreted Mactavish's words as some sort of abdication but it was not so. Mactavish's government had been dead since November 23rd; it needed only a decent burial, and his statement to the four delegates merely provided the English delegates with an excuse to join the French in forming a provisional government, something that by February 1870 had come to be a quite desirable thing.

When the convention agreed on a provisional government on February 10th, Riel released Mactavish and Cowan. Mactavish, commenting on their treatment over the past months, said:

The outrages to which the Company's people here have been exposed at the hands of Riel and his people are greater than you probably would believe. His unbridled insolence and violence are of a nature which it would be profitless for me to describe in

detail. His imprisonment of Doctor Cowan and myself was doubtless meant to intimidate opposition by holding us as hostages.

Riel made a final assault on Mactavish in March, demanding a number of concessions from the Company, including the "loan" of five thousand pounds sterling and the donation of four thousand pounds' worth of provisions. In return, Riel would permit the Company to resume business. With the threat of Métis plundering of the forts in the outlying districts hanging over his head, Mactavish was forced to comply, and the agreement was signed on April 5th. Riel at first, after making his demands, seemed in no hurry to conclude the agreement. Mactavish, writing to Bishop Taché, lately returned to the settlement, said:

I have not seen President Riel yet, and am anxious to know whether he is keeping off till I write him, or is just waiting till he has time to see me. Should I write to him and beg him to come and see me, as I have long made up my mind, on the point he and I last spoke. I know I have before given him offense by asking him to *come to me*, and I don't want to do that. At the same time no feeling of ill-timed vanity has interfered with my asking him now. A mere hint for me to open communication with him or not will suffice. But I would prefer agreeing to the loan personally, as thought in the first instance, and I would like at the same time to speak to him about his communications for Fort Ellice and other posts. I am afraid you will have difficulty in reading this scrawl.

It was indeed a scrawl, but Mactavish had good excuse for it. Throughout the winter, except for temporary slight recoveries, he had remained critically ill, confined most of the time to his bed and "nightly coughing much blood". As the winter crept by, Mactavish made plans to leave the settlement early in the spring if he were strong enough to be moved.

There remained a question, though, whether he would live till spring. He later said himself that he had felt during the winter as if he were at death's door. But as the weather warmed he improved somewhat. By April he was able to climb stairs and go outside to walk around a little on the platform before his door. He continued to improve throughout the month and in May the *New Nation*, the local newspaper that replaced the defunct *Nor' Wester*, said: "It has been with great pleasure that the public generally has seen the old gentleman, on various occasions within the past few weeks, sufficiently recovered to be driven short distances beyond the walls of the fort."

In early May the settlement learnt that Mactavish would be leaving by the second steamboat of the season.

There soon arose some question as to whether Riel would let Mactavish leave. After being paid a visit by the old governor, however, Riel made no attempt to detain him.

When the steamboat *International* started on her second trip of the year up the Red on May 17th, Governor Mactavish and his family were on board. Alexander Begg, a local writer and free trader, described the departure:

A number of people went to the landing, to see them off, and a short time before the hour of starting the Governor drove down to the bank of the river, and there alighted, being assisted by Mr. Hargrave, his Secretary, and Mr. J. H. McTavish, the accountant of the Fort. All were shocked at the feeble appearance of the good old man, reduced as he was almost to a skeleton. Resting on his walking stick, he tottered toward the steamer, every now and again casting his eyes around as if bidding farewell to the scenes of so many years of labor.

* * *

Those who watched the departure of Governor Mactavish were deeply touched at the sight of a man who had given his life, as it were, for the country, leaving it in the state he was, enfeebled and broken down, —a wreck of manhood,—brought on, as it was well known, through his hard work and anxiety in behalf of the country and those living in it.

The gangways were taken up as soon as the family got on board. A thin, penetrating rain began to fall, and a strong wind arose that gave the *International* trouble in getting away from her moorings. But it was not long before the steamer churned its way out of sight around a bend in the river.

The *New Nation* in its next issue said, in part:

We feel that this announcement will be read from one end of this country to the other, with profound regret; as it is useless to conceal the well-known fact, that Mr. Mactavish's departure on the present occasion is final, the state of his health permitting no hope to be entertained of his returning amongst us to exercise any of those public functions, in the conscientious and successful performance of which he has for many years enjoyed our confidence and deserved our gratitude.

. . .

The good wishes we express, and the regrets at the departure of this gentleman from among us, are not the words of party spirit, but are the sentiments of all here, of every party and school of politics, who knew his kind considerateness of manner and moderation in his public capacity, and the many admirable traits which characterised him in the intercourse of private life. We fear we shall not soon "look upon his like again."

By May 28th Mactavish had reached Georgetown, near present-day Fargo, North Dakota, and by June 15th he was at St. Paul. Instead of going up into Canada he went straight to New York, where he was interviewed by a reporter of the *New York Sun*. The *New Nation* reprinted the interview, noting that "those here familiar with Mr. Mactavish's style will easily recognize . . . his usual straightforward, impartial and independent manner of reply. During the interview Mactavish made it clear that he held no bad feeling for the Métis generally for his trials of the past winter, saying "they are trustworthy, and are men of good common sense".

Mactavish left New York early in July, arrived in Liverpool on the 21st, and died two days later. Sir Stafford Northcote, the Governor of the Company, wrote: "He died soon after landing at Liverpool and none of us had an opportunity of seeing him at all."

Flags at Fort Garry and at the Emmerling House in Winnipeg, a hotel owned by an American named Henry Emmerling, were lowered to half mast; the *New Nation*, though having spent itself on Mactavish's departure, nevertheless made a valiant effort to produce further eulogy; others in the settlement thought of Mactavish more privately—as a member of the Red River Cricket Club and the scientific society, as a co-worker on the Council of Assiniboia, or just as the father of four of the settlement's children.

Louis Riel still sat in Fort Garry, deserted by most of his Métis supporters and awaiting with some anxiety the slowly advancing troops of the 1,200-man British-Canadian Wolseley expedition. From Red River he would eventually go into exile, then make one last attempt at leadership and glory with far unhappier results. His death by hanging would bring him fame, but would cost him his identity, as he became little more than a hollow symbol squabbled over and beaten about by factitious abuse and praise.

Mactavish's death brought him only obscurity. His job had offered him a chance to achieve political greatness of a sort but political greatness was not within him and he fell short. Still, he had been a good man and a good governor, better perhaps than Red River deserved. And if he had wrestled unsuccessfully with the settlement's basic problem—the clash between the somewhat primitive culture of the Métis and the more advanced civilization marching westward from Ontario—it was a problem few governments ever resolved without strife. In any case, though Riel got all the publicity perhaps William Mactavish, the man whose dignity Riel had so heedlessly trampled on, earned for himself a better prize—the quiet respect of those who knew him. ♦

DOWN THE RIVER TRAIL OF '98 IN A MODERN CANOE

picture story by ED FERRELL



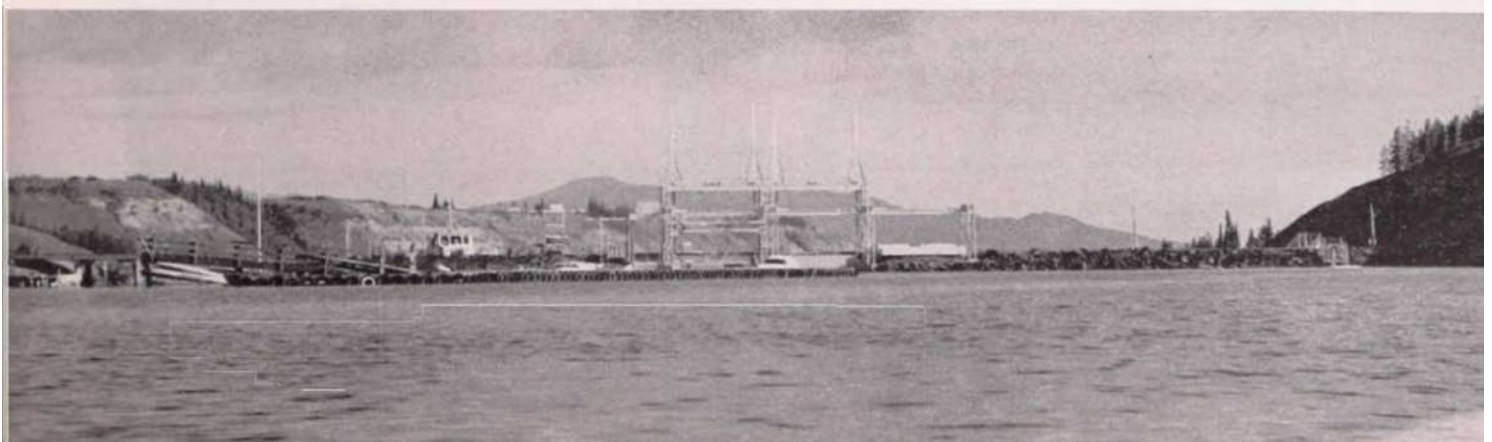
Moved to follow the water route of the stampede in the Klondike gold rush, Bob Allensworth and I started our trip at Lake Bennett north of the mountain passes. Our craft was a seventeen-foot aluminum canoe equipped with a three-horsepower motor. In 1898 Bennett City was a tent and shack town of thousands of stampedees preparing to make the long float to Dawson. Today only a few relics remain apart from some faded photographs—an unfinished church, a serpentine trail scar on the mountain—but the lake is the same as one looks down it towards Carcross. The cold waters that floated a flotilla of barges and boats 65 years ago still slap gently against the beach. These calm waters could turn into dangerous white-capped breakers, as many of the prospectors found out, and we, too, learnt. One evening while fishing for lake trout a sudden squall hit us and before we could reach shore the canoe was taking three-foot waves. Such storms are common on Lake Bennett.



At Carcross we saw the first of many river boats that were on the beach. Paddlewheelers like the *Tutshi* served the Yukon villages for over half a century. As the roads pushed north and the mines declined the age of the river boats ended and with it a way of life on the Yukon.

Carcross is a small village located between Lakes Bennett and Tagish. Called Caribou Crossing, as a fording place of the herds, the name was shortened at the behest of Bishop Bompas to distinguish it from similarly named places. By way of Tagish and Marsh Lakes we came to the Yukon River itself.

We stopped at Whitehorse to pick up supplies. For the stamperers Whitehorse was a milestone — it meant they had successfully run Miles Canyon and the Whitehorse Rapids which dashed many hopes as amateur sailors failed to get through. In recent years a dam has been built, taming the rapids and creating Lake Schwatka. We made a long portage over the retaining wall at the right of the dam.





Soon after leaving Whitehorse we entered Lake Laberge, its name made famous in the verse of Robert Service. Indian villages and camps have gone and near the abandoned settlement of Upper Laberge lies the battered hull of the steamer *Casca*. In an old cabin a few miles past the outlet of the lake the walls were covered with newspapers that carried news of the turn of the century, one headline reading "Cuban War Ends."

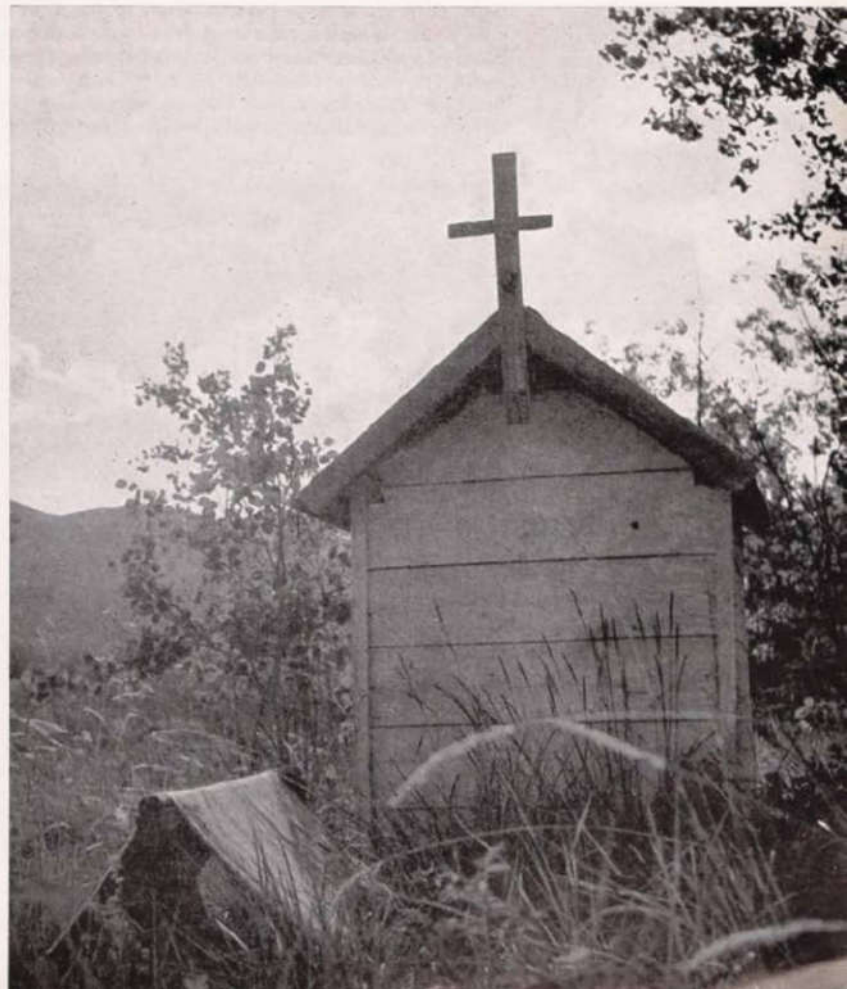
Farther down the Yukon was the deserted settlement of Big Salmon. In earlier days most of the Indian villages supplied the steamers with wood. When the boats stopped many people moved to villages along the Alaska Highway.





After three days of travel from Lake Laberge we approached one of the famous landmarks of gold rush days, Five Finger Rapid, named for the rocks which divide the river. In Carmacks we had been advised by an old-timer to take "Steamboat Channel," the one on the right. "Cut your motor," he advised, "and let the current take you. You'll come through bobbing like a cork." Bob steered towards the right bank and cut the motor. The canoe was picked up as if by some invisible force and hurtled towards the rocks. As it hit the vortex of the current it suddenly straightened and shot through the maw of white water. This happened faster than it takes to tell. Although we shipped some water, we came through "bobbing like a cork" as the old man had predicted.

Before reaching Five Finger Rapid we had gone ashore at the site of an abandoned camp where we had noticed a small structure on a high bank above the river. We climbed several hundred feet to a lonely Indian grave. The faint inscription indicated that it was a child's grave. The small plot overlooked a beautiful stretch of the river. No parent could have given his child a finer monument.





In the first decades of this century Yukon Crossing was an important ferry and passenger exchange link on the old Dawson and Whitehorse Road. The roadhouse, halfway point on the route, is today a log shell, the roof and floor long since caved in. A few shreds of flowered wall-paper still cling to the rough walls of the dining room. Outside in the coach yard wild roses and bluebells reclaim the land. Near the roadhouse are the remains of an abandoned mail coach. Earliest gold rush mail was carried by the North-West Mounted Police by boat or dogteam.

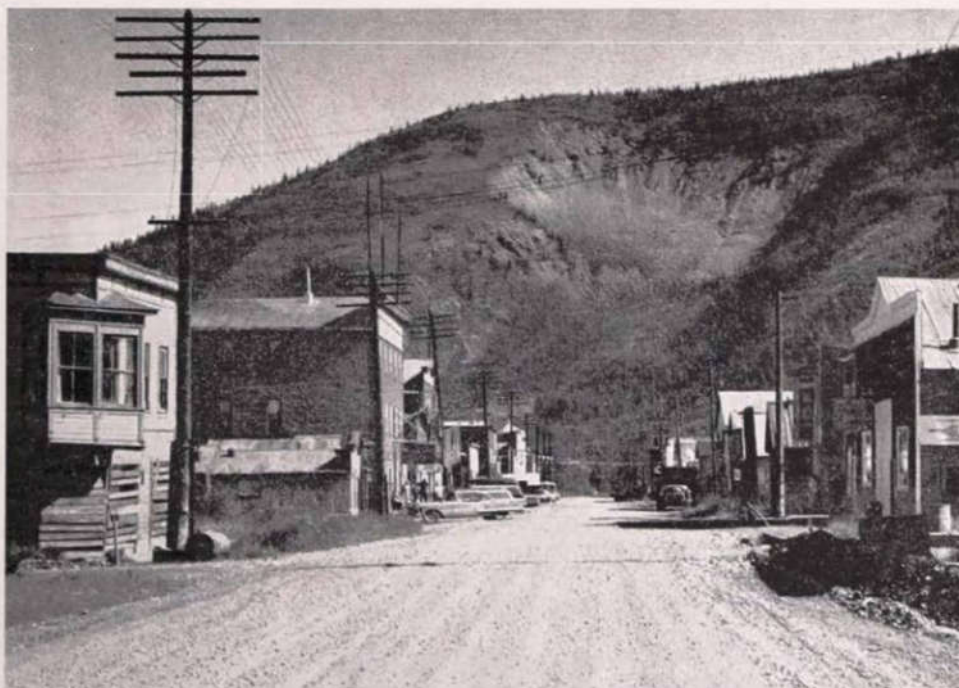
A day's run from Yukon Crossing we saw a church steeple glistening in the evening sun in what seemed to be a town asleep. We half expected to be greeted at the landing, although





we knew old Fort Selkirk was deserted. Founded as an H B C post in 1848, Selkirk suffered fire and pillage, revived to become headquarters of the Yukon Field Force in '98, but could not survive progress. As trapping and mining declined the town withered and the end came when the river boats were beached.

On the 14th day after leaving Lake Bennett we rounded a bend in the river and saw the rock slide scar on the mountain that identifies Dawson. In '98 over 7,000 boats rounded the same bend to give the gold seekers their first glimpse of what was probably the most eagerly anticipated landmark on the Yukon, Dawson being at the mouth of the Klondike with its rich creeks.





At Moosehide, Indian village below Dawson, a fishwheel revolves in the current scooping up unwary salmon. During the spawning run these wheels are very efficient. The Yukon River is too heavily silted for good sport fishing but we took grayling from Fortymile River near the old town and pike from sloughs along the Yukon.

Several cabins in the ghost town of Fortymile are used for sleeping quarters for tourists on guided float trips from Dawson to Eagle. We were the only visitors and the cook who was in charge of the camp offered us a cabin for the night. Eight of the original buildings still stand and we looked through the deserted log church and barracks for this was the site of the first North-West Mounted Police post in the Yukon, established before gold was found in the Klondike.

This was our last stop in Canada. We continued down the river to Eagle in Alaska, a two-day run from Dawson, and on to Circle City, the end of our trip, with some 1,000 water miles behind us since we set out down Lake Bennett.



NORTHERN BOOKS

NAPASKIAK

By Wendell Oswalt. The University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1963. xii, 178 pages, illus. \$3.50

MISSION OF CHANGE IN ALASKA

By Wendell H. Oswalt. Huntington Library Publications. The Huntington Library, San Marino, California, 1963. x, 170 pages. \$6.00

Reviewed by Dorothy Jean Ray

These two related studies of the Kuskokwim River Eskimos in Alaska by Wendell Oswalt, anthropologist at the University of California, Los Angeles, appeared almost simultaneously. The locale of *Mission of Change* is Bethel; that of *Napaskiak*, seven miles downstream.

Napaskiak originally presented as a doctoral dissertation, is a description of life in a contemporary Eskimo village with special emphasis on childhood and adolescence. Other aspects covered in minutiae of detail include the subsistence quest, menus for all occasions, Russian Orthodox Church activities, and the steam bath. Oswalt attempts a sociocultural classification of Napaskiak and discusses it relative to the Siriono and Ona Indians of South America, and the Chipewyan, Shoshoni, and Hopi of North America. He considers Napaskiak to be "a simpler form of society and culture than that defined as folk by Redfield," and suggests Napaskiak as the type example to be called "family folk" as distinguished from Redfield's "folk," which he would propose to call "community folk". Although family folk might superficially fit an isolated case, it implicitly excludes political organization, which is undergoing conceptual modification by pioneers in this field today. Although the author says: "There are no ethnographic descriptions of aboriginal Napaskiak," he categorically asserts that "There existed a state of contained anarchy, in which no individual or organized group of individuals controlled any activities in the name of the community". This is contrary to findings of recent studies in primitive government, which have described and defined political organization in the simplest of societies. Only time will tell which viewpoint prevails.

From his observations in this contemporary village, Oswalt also disagrees with two widely reported and well entrenched ideas of Eskimo life: the well behaved Eskimo child, and the mechanical ability of the Eskimo ("there may be Eskimos with extraordinary mechanical skills, but there are none in this community").

Mission of Change in Alaska, though ostensibly designed as an analysis of Kuskokwim Eskimo culture change resulting from establishment of the Moravian mission, is in reality a fine summary of Kuskokwim culture history from 1884 to 1925. The discussion of the mission's activities is presented sympathetically, and the smoother writing style of this book enables one to read it with ease, which is not always true of *Napaskiak*. The index is also more elaborate and useful.

In 1884 Henry Hartmann and William Henry Weinland arrived in Alaska seeking a field for their missionary endeavours. Not wishing to trespass on the pastures of the Russian Orthodox Church, already firmly established in southern Alaska, they chose the Kuskokwim River, suggested by the Russian priest at Nushagak. They decided to build the mission near Mumtrekhlagamiut Station, a trading post, considered to be the centre of a well-populated area. The following year five missionaries established residence. It is from Mr Weinland's papers in the Huntington Library that Oswalt has drawn a large proportion of his material on which to base his interpretations of change in religion and related spheres of life such as subsistence pursuits and trade relations. Many excerpts are printed verbatim.

Whereas *Napaskiak*'s greatest value is in offering a great deal of raw material for future anthropological studies, *Mission of Change in Alaska* is a book that will be useful not only for the author's conclusions about cultural change derived from his study of religion (the result was not chaos and disorganization), but also his suggestions for directed change. It is hoped that similar studies of change resulting from the impact of various religious sects in the North will be published for comparative purposes.

Despite their basic relationship with the Alaskan missions, the Moravian missions of Labrador also deserve this attention because of several important differences in ecological setting, length of active participation, and administrative supervision and missionary personnel.

One of the eight chapters is devoted to "The Traders and the Eskimos". The author observes that "When the first Russians arrived in Alaska, smoking, chewing, and snuffing tobacco were all well entrenched and apparently had been so for at least a hundred years." A comparatively minor point, this issue nevertheless calls for attention at this time because several current northern research projects are concerned with early trade in Alaska and Canada. Facts already ascertained relative to the dispersion of tobacco in China and Russia—the only sources of Siberian trade tobacco—demonstrate the falsity of the traditional assumption. If the date of the first Russian arrival is taken to be 1741, or Bering's second expedition, it would mean that tobacco was in use by 1641. This view neatly fits the dates of the first Cossack posts established around 1650 in Siberia. However, the Cossacks did not possess tobacco because of a ban placed on its importation and use in Russia by Czar Michael in 1643. Not until 1698 did Peter the Great revoke the ban, thus permitting importation and cultivation of tobacco in Russia. Tobacco probably did not enter Siberian trade until many decades later. Chinese tobacco was also late arriving in Siberia. Berthold Laufer concluded that the Dauri, a Tungus tribe living more than two thousand miles from Chukchi traders, did not receive tobacco until 1693. No doubt small amounts trickled to America after 1720 or 1730, but tobacco did not become of full-fledged commercial importance until the Anyui Trade Fair (Kolyma River) was established in 1789 specifically for Russian-Chukchi tobacco-fur exchange.

Mrs Ray, author of "Artists of the Tundra and the Sea," is an anthropologist whose interests are in Eskimo culture and whose particular field of study has been the Eskimos of Alaska.

THE NORSE ATLANTIC SAGA

By Gwyn Jones. Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1964. 246 pages, illus. \$7.50.

Reviewed by G. W. Rowley

The Norse sagas throw a flood of light on the last scenes of the Heroic Age in northern Europe. Using them as his main source, Professor Gwyn Jones describes the attempts of the Vikings to establish colonies along the shores of the north Atlantic. His account is in three parts, Iceland, Greenland, and North America; each is an enthralling story in itself. Iceland was colonized from Scandinavia, Greenland from Iceland, and Vinland from Greenland. The impetus behind these movements was progressively less, and the interest of the homeland in the colonies decreased with increasing distance. In Iceland the colonies survived, in Greenland they struggled on for some five centuries and then disappeared, in North America they never became firmly established.

Two questions that have caused endless discussion are why the Greenland colonies disappeared so completely and what parts of North America were visited during the Vinland voyages. From both literary and archaeological evidence, Professor Gwyn Jones concludes that isolation from northern Europe was probably the main cause for the disappearance of the Greenland colonies. The saga accounts of the Vinland voyages, though of fundamental importance, are ambiguous, contradictory, and confusing. Archaeology is of some help, but Professor Gwyn Jones seems less at home here than he is with literary sources. He considers that the Skraeling boats found by Thorvald could not be Eskimo kayaks on the grounds that the Dorset culture Eskimo probably did not have kayaks, yet in discussing the Skraelings with whom Karlsefni fought he says, "In their skin-boats or canoes, brandishing their double paddles, . . . one feels they must be Eskimo." In fact not enough is yet known about the Dorset culture Eskimos to say what sort of boats they had, or to support Professor Gwyn Jones' statements that the bow and arrow was unknown to them and that the bladder-harpoon was one of their main weapons. Nevertheless the case he makes for northern Newfoundland as the main scene of Norse activities is a convincing one, and is supported by Ingstad's recent excavations there.

Norse Atlantic Saga is a book that will delight everyone interested in this period. It is written with the

simplicity and skill that mark a master of his subject. The last section of the book consists of translations of the main sources, and will be a most useful reference for all those who like seeking their own solutions to these puzzles.

Graham Rowley, Secretary of the Advisory Committee on Northern Development, has been associated with numerous arctic expeditions and has a special interest in exploration and archaeology.

THE WEST OF WILLIAM H. ASHLEY; The international struggle for the fur trade of the Missouri, the Rocky Mountains, and the Columbia, with explorations beyond the Continental Divide, recorded in the diaries and letters of William H. Ashley and his contemporaries, 1822-1838.

Edited by Dale L. Morgan. The Old West Publishing Company, Denver, Colorado, 1964. xi-liv, 341 pages, illus., maps, index. \$35.00.

Reviewed by Dorothy O. Johansen

This impressive, oversize, five and one-half pound book is the product of the combined talents of two perfectionists: Dale L. Morgan, historian of the fur trade, and Lawton Kennedy, book designer and printer. From cover to cover its physical appearance asserts it is a Kennedy book; the text, however, is undeniably Morgan.

In his *Overland in 1846: Diaries and letters of the California-Oregon Trail* (1963) and in *The West of William H. Ashley* . . . Morgan has adopted a method of framing bodies of primary source materials in a running narrative. The result is a new kind of history which speaks with undeniable authority.

An account of Ashley's career in the fur trade and a concise twenty-five page summary of exploration and trade before 1822 preface two sections of chronologically arranged letters, diaries, and newspaper items mined from the Missouri Historical Society's rich collection and elsewhere. Morgan allows those which do so to speak for themselves; but others he sets in a context which unfold Ashley's activities and those of his associates. Ninety-eight pages of notes form a small encyclopedia of information (and documentation) for the Ashley era.

Not all readers, however, will be convinced by these items, and Morgan's assertions, that Ashley's West

was the theatre of a struggle warranting the international dimension Morgan assigns to it in his sub-title. Book I, "The Bloody Missouri," demonstrates that Indian hostilities diverted the Americans from the upper river. "Perhaps" the British supplied the natives with arms and ammunition "to annoy the Missouri traders" (p. xxxvi). But Nor'Westers annoyed Hudson's Bay Company traders (and vice versa) in a struggle that had commercial and local rather than international implications. The same can be said for rival American traders.

The Continental Divide was the boundary of American territory. Beyond it, American and British traders met on politically neutral ground. After a single clash between a party of Ashley's men and Peter Skene Ogden of the Hudson's Bay Company, the British withdrew from disputed territory. In 1824-25 the issue of territorial sovereignty was determined at the diplomatic level, not in the field, as far as the Company's traders were concerned.

Yet in the competition for furs, "It was Ashley who established the American fur trade on a permanent footing in the Rockies in the face of opposition by Indians and British traders" (p. xxix). He was able to do so because he "introduced into the West the distinctive type . . . the mountain man," and because he "originated that extraordinary institution . . . the rendezvous" (ibid.). The advantages of this particular kind of personnel and of this particular method of supplying parties were fully appreciated by Ogden who lacked them.

The heart of Book II, "Beyond the Continental Divide," is Ashley's diary of 25 March to 27 June 1825, which Morgan identified and edited for the *Bulletin of the Missouri Historical Society*, October 1954-April 1955. As Morgan points out, placed in the context of other relevant Ashley items, it corrects many details of Harrison C. Dale's pioneer work on Ashley as an explorer and major figure in the development of the trade (p. xi). Ashley's letter to Major General Alexander Macomb (March 1829), first printed in *Senate Document 39, 21st Congress, 2nd Session* but here read in conjunction with the diary, emphasizes the measure of Ashley's leadership. In this letter, Ashley explains his method of "equipping and moving parties through the Indian Country," his organization of messes, and the discipline he imposed upon his men during the march and

in camp (pp. 193-4). This properly explodes the myth of the mountain man being undisciplined and free-wheeling on the job as in his moments of relaxation.

This is a volume of great value to students of the West. Morgan himself points out its importance: "*The West of William H. Ashley* is such a book as I would have liked to lay my hands upon when I entered the field of Western history twenty-five years ago" (p. xi). All who have had the temerity to enter the field in this interval have owed much to Dale Morgan for his *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West* (1953). Their debt is even greater now.

Dr. Johansen is professor of history at Reed College in Portland, Oregon and author of introduction to the Hudson's Bay Record Society volume "Ogden's Snake Country Journal 1826-7."

THE POSTAL HISTORY OF YUKON TERRITORY

Written and published by R. G. Woodall, Forest Cottage, Holtwood, Wimborne, Dorset, England. 156 pages, index and maps. 1964. 42 shillings plus postage.

Very little has been written about the postal history of the Yukon Territory, and the author is to be commended for making a start, based upon many years of investigation. Regardless of the title, this book does not pretend to be the definitive history, as in his introduction Mr Woodall says: "It is hoped that this book will be a useful guide to a starting point from which new expeditions can be planned into the postal history of Yukon Territory."

The history begins with John Bell's trip from Peel River post (Fort McPherson, N.W.T.) westward across the mountains in 1842 and ends with events in 1961. The part played by the fur traders, missionaries, North West Mounted Police, and miners, as well as the effect of the railway, Canol project, Alaska Highway and the aeroplane are discussed.

It is surprising to read in an 1894 report of the N.W.M.P. that "In the ordinary course of the present mail service, or rather want of mail service, a letter written in eastern Canada later than May would not arrive at Forty Mile until the following May, and no answer would be received for another year." However, the Force with their characteristic

thoroughness soon improved the service. The Postmaster General reported in 1899 that the N.W.M.P. made 16 winter trips from Bennett to Dawson, and 13 trips from Dawson to Bennett carrying mail, and this at a time when a letter mailed from Dawson cost \$1.00.

Of particular interest to collectors will be chapter XX which has seven pages of illustrated postmarks and 17 pages of post office listings and an approximate value of postmarks.

This is not just a book for people interested in postal history. It is a readable and well-researched account of the growth of the Territory. The mimeographed, loose-leaf format makes possible the addition of new or revised pages at any time.

Incidentally, the author is particularly interested in hearing from people who have postal information which could be included in a supplement.—S.A.S.

MANY TRAILS

By R. D. Symons, Longmans Canada Limited, Toronto, 1963. 202 pages, illus. \$5.50.

Reviewed by Donald Denmark

Many Trails tells of an English boy who at the age of 16, came alone in 1914 to make his way in the Canadian West. A very practical young man—before leaving home he learned to milk a cow. He describes his upbringing—his father, an eminent artist and his mother, a musician and composer, brought up their nine children without fear or favour. "None of Father's children had what is called a college education. What was much more important, we learned how to take a bawling out, how to use horse sense, how to manipulate the most unpromising materials or dis-

heartening conditions into lasting things of value. Summed up, how to live what they now call, I believe, 'a full life.' How to be happy on the half loaf, which is all most of us get out of life anyway—to the lasting good of our sense of humour and our immortal souls."

Little wonder that Symons quickly adapted himself to the dust, toil and blizzards of a western ranch which he describes in detail, yet in a most interesting narrative. Here he was privileged to know Ma Parsons who, early in the century had made a trip by bush and prairie trails from a Swan River homestead to a new cattle ranch in the Cypress Hills of Saskatchewan. Parsons got restless and craved more room when his homestead was cleared and "proved up" so he took off on a new venture, leaving Ma to sell the farm and follow with four children, two ox-teams drawing a covered wagon and loaded hayrack, and assorted livestock, herded by the oldest boy on horseback. How Ma made it in the course of three months is a story in itself and a tribute to the pioneer women of our prairies. She was molested only by clouds of mosquitoes and was helped on her way by all she met on the trail, which causes one to reflect on the breed of people who settled the West—an unprotected family could travel for months, camping by their wagons, without fear.

Following service in France in World War I, Symons spent a year or two in the Chilcotin country of British Columbia, which was not wasted time. He liked the Chilcotin Indians, despite their dirt and improvident ways. He describes a wild ride with ponies and loaded pack horses over hills and valleys strewn with windfall. One thing shocked him—the Indians' neglect of and complete lack of concern for their horses, which are so essential to their way of life.

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Next came a stretch of homesteading in Saskatchewan. As a surveyor, I must point out a slight error in the township diagram where the South West Quarter of Section 3-25-16, W. 3rd M., is shown as "S.E." The author's stay on his homestead was enlivened by his love of wildlife. But, Mr Symons, why did you not plough around those prairie chicks and leave a patch of vegetation to protect them from the hungry crows?

As a game guardian in the parklands of Northern Saskatchewan, the author learned something of the language and customs of the Cree Indians. Fortunately, he knew these lovable people before contact with renegade white men and bootleggers left its mark. Then came a move to the Pasquia hills and the marshes along the Carrot River. This reviewer, who paddled and packed these marshes in 1923, well appreciates Symons' delight in the wildlife there. From these hills he would have a grand view of the great marshes of the Saskatchewan River at Cumberland House, the scene of extensive muskrat conservation in recent years.

When the author painted the true-to-life backgrounds for the excellent wildlife habitat displays in the Museum of Natural History at Regina, I am sure his thoughts went back to the dance of the sandhill cranes which he had watched in the Carrot River marshes.

There are some very fine pencil sketches. To me it is a toss-up which is the best—the fording of the Chilko River or the Chilcotin Indian squatting by Symons' camp stove. The book is an authentic, very interesting account of life on the Canadian Western frontier early in this century.

Surveying and natural history have been the special fields of interest of Mr Denmark who has personal experience of much of the north and west country.

THE CANADIAN OXFORD DESK ATLAS OF THE WORLD

Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1963. 155 pages. \$3.95.

A small atlas can provide a vast amount of information if it is carefully planned as this one is, under the advisory editing of Professor E. G. Pleva. In this second edition of the compact atlas the Canadian 1961 census figures have been included, a needed Arctic map has been added, and the Territories are given more adequate treatment, a re-arrangement

Reprinted EXPEDITIONS TO THE CANADIAN ARCTIC

By P. D. Baird

This 16-page pamphlet lists sea and land expeditions from earliest times to 1918, naming leaders, vessels, objectives and results, and publications describing each of the expeditions.

Available for 35 cents from
The Beaver, Hudson's Bay House
Winnipeg 1, Manitoba

shows the western provinces and the prairie provinces more logically as units (though unfortunately Alberta and Manitoba lose a little of their northern boundaries in the process), permafrost range is shown, greater use of the hill-shading technique enhances the physical maps but sometimes at the expense of legibility.

Mention might be made in the index that the primary vegetation map of Canada includes the main aboriginal groups.

Emphasis of the atlas is of course on Canada, but other regions, the Caribbean, United Kingdom, Ireland, Middle East, for instance—receive more detailed treatment than in the first edition. Useful world economic maps have been added. The Gazetteer is separated between Canada and the World.

Excellent value for a handy (7 1/2" by 10 1/2") atlas.

DEW UPON THE GRASS

By Billie Lamb Allan. Modern Press, Saskatoon, 1963. 140 pages, illus. map endpapers. \$3.50.

Reviewed by Lyn Harrington

This slender volume of reminiscences of the burgeoning Lamb family of Manitoba and Saskatchewan is a portrait of pioneering east of The Pas, Manitoba. Seventh of the eleven Lamb children, Billie (christened Gladys Lillian) recounts the hardships of a free-trader, and particularly that trader's wife early in this century.

T. H. P. Lamb left a teaching position with the Coldstream Guards for the Canadian West in 1891. He worked at various unfamiliar jobs, and was glad to go teaching in Angli-

can Indian mission schools in Central Manitoba. It was in the Grand Rapids rectory he met the diminutive red-haired English governess who agreed to share his fortunes.

In 1901, Mr Lamb became an independent trader, built a log house and fur trading post two miles from the Hudson's Bay Company post at Moose Lake. A decade later he moved to Moose Lake, where his trading post is still operated, among other enterprises, by his son Tom Lamb.

Most accounts of a trader's life are written from the male point of view. It is refreshing to explore the family angle. Mrs Allan has crammed her text with little anecdotes of family and Indian neighbours, in vaguely chronological order, and as sentimental as the title hints.

However she editorializes too much, and her style tends to be exclamatory ("What horrors he must have suffered!") like much amateur writing. Certainly life was rugged for these pioneers who set high English standards, such as starched hand-made white dresses with ruffles for five daughters. Yet this was by no means uncommon on farms across Canada at that time.

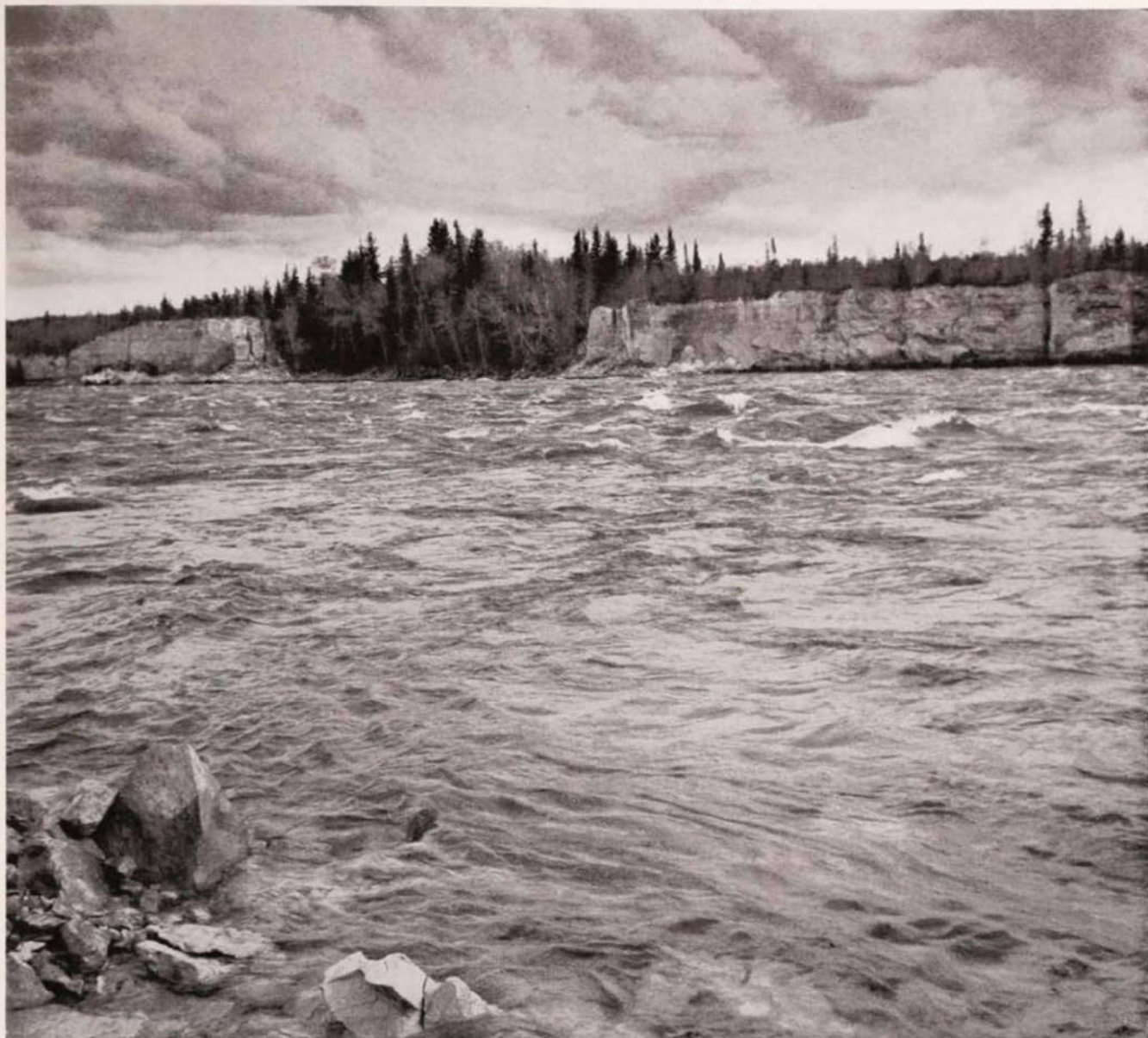
Dew Upon the Grass was originally serialized in Saskatoon's weekly *Western Producer*. A narrative of keen interest to anyone acquainted with the Lamb family, it is also useful for details of living conditions half a century ago.

Mrs Harrington is a widely travelled Canadian author among whose publications is a book on Manitoba.

ERRATA

Outfits: Some readers, unfamiliar with the ways of the Honourable Company, may wonder why volumes of *The Beaver* are called Outfits and why they do not run from the beginning of the year. This is a continuation of the Fur Trade practice of calling one trading year an outfit. Because of the seasonal nature of the trade an outfit began in the summer and finished the following spring after the furs had been traded. Outfit No. 1 was the trading year begun in 1670, when the Company was incorporated, and ended in 1671.

By mistake, the spring 1964 issue of *The Beaver* was incorrectly numbered; it was actually the fourth issue of Outfit 294. This led to an error in the summer issue, the first of Outfit 295 (not 296) which will run through spring 1965.



The Grand Rapids of the Saskatchewan (see page 16) before the dam was built, looking across the upper rapids to the limestone cliffs of the south bank.



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